

27 killed in German DC-3 crash

HEIDELBERG, Germany (AP) — A vintage DC-3 propeller airplane crashed Sunday into a hill wrapped in fog, killing 27 people. Three people survived, authorities said. One survivor with slight injuries walked from the wreckage to the nearest residential area for help, police said. The plane, usually chartered by aviation buffs for "nostalgia" flights, took off from Frankfurt and crashed about noon (1100 GMT) in a forest near Heidelberg, about 100 kilometres south of Frankfurt, police said. They said rescue teams had trouble reaching the wooded hill where the crash occurred. Four people initially survived, but one man died en route to the Heidelberg University Clinic, police said. A spokesman for Classic Wings, the company that operated the vintage plane, said the aircraft took off from Frankfurt with 27 passengers and three crew members. Hans-Ulrich Ohl, spokesman for Germany's civil aviation authority, said there had been no radio contact with the crew before the crash, indicating that there was little forewarning. Mr. Ohl said the pilots were relying on their sight at the time of the crash and were not using instruments.

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Soviet ambassador arrives in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Despite the dismantling of the Soviet Union, Alexander Gromyko will receive the usual diplomatic ceremony Monday when he presents his credentials as the first Soviet ambassador to Israel in 24 years. The Soviet anthem will be played and the red hammer and sickle flag hoisted as Mr. Gromyko meets President Chaim Herzog at his residence, officials said Sunday after Mr. Gromyko's arrival. "This may be the last time the Soviet anthem is going to be played anywhere," noted Shlomo Avineri, former director-general of the foreign ministry. Mr. Gromyko was appointed by Mikhail Gorbachev. It was not clear whether Russian President Boris Yeltsin would retain him.

Assad's son on visit to S. Arabia

DAMASCUS (R) — Major Bassel al-Assad, eldest son of Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, is visiting Saudi Arabia, the Syrian News Agency (SANA) reported Sunday. It said he was welcomed on his arrival in the Saudi capital on Saturday by Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, deputy chief of the Riyadh region, and several senior military officers. SANA quoted Riyadh radio as saying Major Assad had dinner on Saturday with Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, who is chief of the National Guard. It said the visit would last several days.

Yemeni leader meets Iranian speaker

SANAA (R) — Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Iran's Parliament Speaker Mehdi Karubi discussed Sunday ways of boosting bilateral cooperation as well as Islamic issues of common concern, Radio Sanaa reported. It said Vice-President Ali Salem al-Baidi took part in the talks. Mr. Karubi earlier met Prime Minister Haider Abu Bakr al-Attas and both were quoted by the radio as expressing a desire to "promote fraternal relations in the interest of their peoples and the Islamic Nation's aims." Karubi arrived in Sanaa on Saturday from Beijing after a five-day visit to China.

Israeli troops clash with guerrillas

NABATIYEH (AP) — A group of Israeli soldiers clashed before dawn Sunday with guerrillas in South Lebanon, a Shiite cleric said. Sheikh Ahmad Taleb, the imam of the southern village of Jibceet, said the Israelis advanced from the village of Qaroun inside their self-styled "security zone" to the outskirts of Jibceet at 1:30 a.m. (2130 GMT Saturday). Guerrillas "spotted the Israelis and a half-hour clash followed," added Sheikh Taleb. He said there were no casualties among the guerrillas. The clash came a day after Israeli forces freed three Lebanese men they abducted Friday, including a butcher whose two children were killed by a booby-trapped flashlight believed planted by the Israelis. Friday's events underscored the spiraling violence that has plagued South Lebanon since the opening of the Middle East peace talks under U.S. and Soviet auspices Oct. 31.

Emigres burn tyres outside Shamir office

TEL AVIV (AP) — About 1,000 Israeli and Russian immigrants burned tyres outside Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's office Sunday to protest the high rate of unemployment. The demonstrators, who adopted the tyre-burning tactic from the Palestinian uprising, shouted for about two hours against a jobs rate that is nearly 11 per cent — the highest figure in about 30 years. Among the about 350,000 Soviets who have come to Israel since 1989, the unemployment rate is estimated to be double that percentage. Many of the protesters were from so-called development towns built to take in immigrants. "Unemployment — a social disaster," read placards carried by some demonstrators. Another sign said, "Give to the factories, instead of the settlements."

Palestinian delegates return home

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The Palestinian delegation to peace talks with Israel returned to occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip Sunday. Unlike on their return from Madrid, there were no welcoming celebrations.

"After the Madrid conference, there was a need for the expression of popular support. Now we are at the beginning of a long and difficult journey and so such an expression was not needed," said delegation spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi.

The team drove in a bus from Amman to the Jordan River crossing into the occupied territories. "The Washington talks were testing grounds," said delegate Saeb Erekat. "The Arab sides were able to see exactly that Israel is not interested in hearing about international legality. Their definition of (U.N. Resolution 242) is different from that of the Arabs and the world as the last thing they want to hear about is land for peace."

Peace talks adjourned on Wednesday until early January after six days of Israeli wrangling over procedure and sterile debate between Israel and Syria over land for peace.

The Arabs accused Israel of time-wasting, while Israel claimed a procedural victory and said the fact a second round of direct peace talks had taken place at all was progress.

Soldiers wound 14

Israeli troops wounded 14 Palestinians when they opened fire during widespread protests in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip Saturday, Palestinian sources said.

Two Palestinians, aged 14 and 16, were hit by plastic bullets at Rafah after an army patrol was stoned, they said.

Nine Palestinian demonstrators

(Continued on page 5)



The Lower House of Parliament during a break in Sunday's session (photo by Youssef Al 'Aham)

House repeals communism law, adopts defence law unchanged

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A law dating back to 1953 banning communism in Jordan and allowing for the prosecution of communist activists and sympathisers was repealed Sunday by the Lower House of Parliament.

The repeal came in the form of a new law sent to Parliament by the government and adopted by the House. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the legislation was in line with the government's "commitment to reconsider all exceptional laws and regulations affecting public freedoms."

In its session Sunday, attended by the two deputy prime ministers and several members of the Council of Ministers, the House also endorsed the 1990 Defence Law, which replaces the 1935 Defence Law.

The new law was approved in its original form since an amendment proposed by the House — under which the Lower House demanded to have the right to pass or reject any declaration of martial law — was turned down by the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution.

The legality of the proposed

amendment was referred to the council by the Upper House of Parliament when the law along with the amendment was referred to it from the Lower House.

Under the original draft of the law — which will be enacted with the issuance of a Royal decree approving it — the King can declare martial law under a recommendation from the Council of Ministers.

The two laws endorsed Sunday came ahead of debate on the House floor of draft legislation on political parties and the press and publication — two key pieces of laws which are expected to set the guidelines for legalised political activities in the Kingdom and enhanced media freedom.

During Sunday's session, the Lower House rejected its Legal Committee the Audit Bureau's annual report for the year 1990. The Legal Committee will study the report and submit related findings and recommendations to the full House.

Several deputies called on the committee to speed up its work and complete its consideration of the Audit Bureau report, which includes findings of specific violations of various nature by some public institutions. The concerned institutions have been

notified of the violations and asked to rectify them, Petra said.

Several ministers replied to specific questions raised by deputies during previous sessions. Most of the questions were related to infrastructure for the agriculture sector in Mafrq and land adjoining the Dead Sea.

Another question raised was related to the number of free Royal Jordanian (RJ) tickets issued to individuals who are not working for the national air carrier.

On a procedural issue, the House took note of the appointment of office-bearers for House committees. Youssef Al Atham (Muslim Brotherhood) was elected chairman and Mohammad Dardour (National Bloc) was elected rapporteur of the Education Committee. Daoud Kojak (Muslim Brotherhood) was elected chairman and Nader Thubeirat (National Bloc) was elected rapporteur of the Administrative Committee.

The next priority for the Lower House is the draft budget for the year 1992. The draft budget was presented to the House by the government earlier this month and the Finance Committee of the House is studying it.

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Jordan delegation returns from Washington

Impasse in talks is over substantive issues, not procedural — Majali

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian delegation to Arab-Israeli peace talks returned home Sunday after an inconclusive round of bilateral negotiations in Washington.

Abdul Salam al-Majali, Jordan's chief negotiator, told reporters at Amman airport that an Israeli deadlock with the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation was over substance and not, as Israel contends, procedure.

"The negotiations were true negotiations in every sense of the word as they dealt with the basis of the talks," he said.

"In Madrid, we consolidated the independent Palestinian identity and buried the subject that Jordan is Palestine," he added. "Unfortunately, Israel this time tried to sabotage what occurred in Madrid, but it

failed," he added.

"What is said that the negotiations in Washington were procedural is untrue ... in fact the corridor diplomacy was a new invention. I affirm to you that they were real negotiations dealing with the essential elements of the (peace) conference."

He stressed that in Madrid the joint delegation succeeded in affirming and illuminating the Palestinian identity.

"This was one brick, (of) several bricks which were built and are standing firmly."

Dr. Abdul Salam accused Israel of attempting to destroy what was achieved in Madrid of making things more difficult. But he affirmed that this would not make the Jordanian or the Palestinian delegations give up

their rights.

He stressed that the U.S. did not "conspicuously interfere" in the negotiation process in Madrid or Washington and expressed his belief that it was better if the co-sponsors did not interfere "in order to refute Israel's claims that Israel could solve problems if it sit (s) with the Arabs without the interference of other parties."

Peace talks between Israel and three separate Arab teams adjourned on Wednesday after six days of Israeli wrangling over the independent negotiating status of the Palestinian team and a debate between Israel and Syria over land for peace.

The Jordanian delegation was received at Amman airport by the King's advisor Khalid al-Karak, Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber and senior officials.

Israeli goal is peace without ceding territory — Shamir

Israel accepts Washington venue for Jan. 7 talks

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Sunday the mission of Israel's negotiators at Middle East peace talks was to achieve peace without giving up land.

In an impassioned speech to about 3,000 members of his Likud Party's central committee, he congratulated the negotiators who returned last week after bilateral talks in Washington were adjourned until early January.

"When our loyal envoys who are representing the state of Israel honestly and wisely went to Madrid and to Washington they had engraved on their hearts and in front of their eyes the commandment: Keep the land of Israel and bring peace," he said.

"Our envoys did their job with zeal and will continue to do it with talent, with wisdom, with intelligence, with good cheer and with all the warmth of their hearts," Mr. Shamir added. "Let's bless these messengers of a good deed."

He spoke hours after his transport minister, Moshe Katzav, announced that Israel had agreed to resume its negotiations with Syria, Lebanon and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation in Washington on Jan. 7.

Mr. Katzav also told reporters after the regular Sunday cabinet meeting that Israel hoped subsequent talks would take place closer to or in the Middle East.

Mr. Shamir also praised Jewish settlers in the occupied territories Sunday as the "emissaries of the people of Israel."

Mr. Shamir's comments followed renewed criticism of Jewish settlements by the United States, which sees them as obstacles to making peace with the Arabs.

The prime minister referred to attacks on the settlers by Palestinians during their uprising.

"There is a group of people among us, a group that to our joy is growing daily, that is exposed to many attacks and threats ... attacks to annihilate life ... to prevent the children of Israel, legal owners of the land of Israel, from settling in their land," Mr. Shamir said.

"The people who live in (the West Bank), the Gaza Strip and the Golan, they are the emissaries of Israel. We are all with you, be blessed," he added.

Mr. Shamir, in opening the Likud meeting that is likely to be divided over a proposal for direct election of the prime minister,

warned against internal party conflicts which could loosen Israel's hold on the occupied territories.

"It should not be that the legitimate disagreements among us will play into the hands of those ready to give away parts of the land of Israel, who are ready to abandon the (the West Bank) and the Gaza Strip," he said.

About 112,000 Jewish settlers have moved to the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip since Israel seized the land in the 1967 war.

The United States last week repeated its criticism of the settlers as an impediment to peace talks after a group of Israelis took over houses in Arab East Jerusalem.

Mr. Shamir urged Likud members to vote against the proposal for direct election of the prime minister, who is traditionally chosen from the party with the most members in parliament.

The move puts Mr. Shamir at odds with several prominent Likud members, including Housing Minister Ariel Sharon and Foreign Minister David Levy.

"Unfortunately the Arab side rejects our proposals in this mat-

(Continued on page 5)

GCC summit opens in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Foreign and finance ministers of the six Arab Gulf states met Sunday to finish the agenda for the three-day Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit that will focus on building military cooperation and a new fund for Arab development.

The meeting of the ruling princes of the Gulf to begin Monday night is the first since Kuwait's liberation. Little consensus has emerged from a year-long round of meetings among ministerial groups on how the six states, rich from oil but poor in human resources, can build a common defence.

"This will be a critical summit," said Abdullah Al Shayji, a political sciences professor at Kuwait University. "It will decide the future of the GCC."

Kuwait's foreign minister and deputy prime minister, Sheikh Salem al-Sabah, said in earlier

press reports that the summit will discuss forming a unified Gulf army and a confederacy that would unify the foreign and then the economic policies of these states.

In its 10-year existence, the GCC has not achieved much in terms of genuine cooperation and unity among its member countries.

"The problem is there is nothing to be shown for the benefit of the people of the Gulf area," said Meshari Al Osa'ni, chairman of the Kuwaiti Lawyers Association. A panel of prominent Kuwaiti lawyers, academics and others sent the leaders a petition asking for more democracy for the region.

Mr. Shayji said that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait proved to the Gulf states that they cannot defend themselves and that agreements with foreign countries were the best form of protection, in spite

of the reservations Saudi Arabia has on such agreements.

Kuwait signed a military cooperation agreement with the United States last September and is expected to sign similar ones with Britain and France.

That effectively killed the Damascus declaration last March that had Egypt and Syria providing defence forces for Kuwait and the Gulf in exchange for economic aid. Arab forces were perceived as a potential threat.

The West, highly dependent on oil from the region, is viewed as a more committed protector.

Issa Al Shamlan, also a political science teacher at Kuwait University, said the proposal of a unified Gulf army was not feasible because it was too costly and it would over-militarise the area.

\$10 billion fund approved, page 7

Waite denies knowledge of arms deal

LONDON (Agencies) — Former hostage Terry Waite said Sunday he knew nothing of the U.S. arms-for-hostages deal but that he was tortured by his captors because of their suspicions.

He also denied news media reports that he was wearing a concealed transmitter when he was seized on what he thought was a trip to visit American hostages in Lebanon in January 1987.

"If any bugging device had been on me, I would be a dead man," Mr. Waite said in his first interview since his release on Nov. 18.

The Church of England envoy said attempts to trade arms for hostages were foolish. But he refused to blame marine Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North, the senior U.S. official who oversaw the secret arms deals, for his nearly five years as a hostage in Lebanon.

"In working for the freedom of hostages you have to relate to a

lot of people," Mr. Waite said of his meetings with Col. North. "You will never know completely what they are doing."

At the time Mr. Waite was seeking the release of hostages, Col. North was secretly arranging arms shipments to Iran in exchange for the release of Americans held by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon.

News reports have speculated that Col. North encouraged the impression that Mr. Waite was responsible for winning the release of several American hostages who were in fact freed as a result of the U.S. arms deals with Iran.

In a 35-minute radio interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation, Mr. Waite said, "there was no way in which the church could or would have any dealings whatsoever in arms for hostages nor, for that matter, in paying ransom for hostages."

He said that because of his captors' suspicions about his in-

volvement with U.S. officials, he was brutally interrogated, beaten on the soles of his feet, kept chained and unable to walk or stand, shown mock executions and told he would be killed.

"I remember sitting on the floor of the cell and making three resolutions — no regrets, no sentimentality and no self-pity," he said. "I had to stick by that and they helped me through."

Asked if he should have been suspicious during his dealings with Col. North, Mr. Waite said he became "suspicious of nearly everybody."

"People are playing games and governments are playing games all the time," he said. "You just are walking through a minefield and one day you may tread on a mine. I tread on a mine, and that's about it."

There have been news reports that Mr. Waite's kidnappers found a tiny transmitter that could have allowed his position to be tracked.

Gorbachev not ready to leave Soviet politics

NEW YORK (R) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said in a U.S. television he intends to remain in politics.

"I think I will not leave the world of politics. As for the role I will be playing, this will be decided in the near future," Mr. Gorbachev told a CBS Television correspondent in an interview taped in Moscow and broadcast Sunday.

"I'm going to wait for the result of the Alma Ata meeting. As soon as I receive official documents and see that the commonwealth is a reality, within a few days I will then take my decision," Mr. Gorbachev said.

Eleven former Soviet republics signed an accord on Saturday in the Kazakhstan capital of Alma Ata, formally establishing the commonwealth of independent states and putting an end to the Soviet Union as a legal and political entity.

When asked about the control of nuclear weapons in the commonwealth, Mr. Gorbachev replied: "There will be no easing of control over the nuclear weapons. And the system we have is much tougher than the one the Americans have. I always remind the Americans of that."

The commonwealth accord has still to be ratified by republican parliaments and further discussions on defence will be tackled at talks in the Byelorussian capital Minsk on Dec. 30.

Questions remained concerning the Kremlin's nuclear arsenal and command of its 3.7 million

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Nosair acquitted of Kahane killing;

Kach diehards vow own 'revenge'

NEW YORK (AP) — An Arab-American was acquitted Saturday night of killing extremist rabbi Meir Kahane, founder of the militant Jewish Defence League (JDL), and a former member of Israel's parliament.

Al Sayyid Nosair, a naturalised U.S. citizen, was convicted of four lesser charges, including assault and illegal possession of a weapon.

Mr. Nosair, 36, was charged with killing Kahane after Kahane delivered a lecture at a Manhattan hotel on Nov. 5, 1990. He also was accused of shooting two people as he fled and commandeering a taxi.

Pandemonium broke out when the verdict was announced. About two dozen Nosair supporters, sitting on one side of the courtroom, started yelling and praising God.

A young Kahane supporter on the other side of the room, began screaming: "Death to Nosair, death to Nosair."

In Israel, Kahane's son issued a statement promising to "revenge ... the blood of Meir Kahane."

"The only punishment befitting to the crime of this individual Nosair is death," said Rabbi Binyamin Zeev Kahane.

Kahane's anti-Arab Kach movement also demanded revenge.

"We know that if justice is not done, then a Jew will rise up who will do justice in this matter," spokesman Baruch Marzel said in an interview with Israel Radio.

In Egypt, opposition politicians praised the verdict and called on the United States to protect Nosair.

"The American judicial system did not submit to threats or blackmail by the Zionist lobby in the United States," said Rifaat al-Saeed, a member of the left-wing National Unionist Progressive party.

The jury reached the verdict in its fourth day of deliberation, following a five-week trial.

Mr. Nosair, who lived in Cliffside, New Jersey, was convicted of two counts of second-degree assault for shooting a postal service police officer and another man as he fled the hotel. He also was convicted of coercion for commandeering a taxi at gunpoint.

Mr. Nosair faces a maximum penalty of two to seven years for each assault charge and the coercion charge. He also faces five to 15 years for criminal possession of a weapon. Had he been convicted of second-degree murder, he would have faced a maximum sentence of 25 years to life.

The jury of nine women and three men in state supreme court

in Manhattan deliberated for four days before delivering its verdict. Mr. Nosair, an air-conditioning technician, smiled as the jury forewoman announced the verdict, and, according to defence lawyer Michael Warren, said, "all praise is due to Almighty God, Allah."

Justice Alvin Schlesinger set sentencing for Jan. 29. Prosecutors had argued that Mr. Nosair shot Kahane in the neck with a .357-calibre Ruger revolver after the rabbi concluded a lecture at the East Side Marriott hotel and then shot Irving Franklin, 74, as he ran from the room.

They said Mr. Nosair then ran outside and commandeered a taxi — the basis for the coercion conviction — and then shot postal police officer Carlos Acosta in the arm. Mr. Acosta returned fire, hitting Mr. Nosair in the throat.

In his statement to police in hospital after the gunfight, Mr. Nosair admitted attending the Kahane lecture but said he was not armed and fled the hotel in fear of his life when shots rang out.

He said that the revolver, with its serial number filed down, found at his side after the shoot-

(Continued on page 5)

Arafat slams U.S., seeks active Chinese role in peace process

HANOI (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat Sunday accused Washington of double standards over Middle East peace efforts and said he was looking to China to play an active role in future talks.

"We are insisting that China has to take part in the multilateral talks and this has been accepted that they will play this role," Mr. Arafat told Reuters. "We are looking for them to play an active role in the multilateral discussions."

Mr. Arafat spoke in Hanoi, the Vietnamese capital, where he was winding up an official visit after a one-day stop in Peking on Friday. Bilateral peace talks in Washington adjourned last Wednesday until early January after six days of Israeli-Palestinian wrangling over procedure and sterile debate between Israel and Syria over land for peace.

Mr. Arafat blamed the United States for the impasse.

"I am sorry to say that talks in Washington arrived at a deadlock and the American sponsors did not fulfill their promise according to the indication of the two texts," he said.

"What has been done by the American administration concerning the (United Nations) resolution shows that they put all their weight against the resolution, which shows they were not using one standard but double standards."

The PLO chairman did not say what texts he was referring to. But he was apparently speaking about the two key U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Middle East conflict, which call on

Rights group accuses Egypt of torture

CAIRO (R) — A human rights group accused Egypt's state security police Sunday of torturing several robbery suspects with electric shocks, leather whips and burning cigarettes and said such methods had become routine.

The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) said public prosecutors had recorded signs of abuse in reports on its interrogation of the suspects "but does not engage in a serious effort to pursue the culprits among the officers responsible for torture and put them up for trial."

"Torture has become a routine method of interrogating suspects in criminal cases investigated by the security bodies and takes place at their headquarters," the group said in a statement sent to Reuters.

EOHR said it had received reports from forensic authorities attached to the Ministry of Justice on injuries sustained by several people arrested after armed robberies on a number of jewelry shops last February.

The group said the torture of the suspects began on April 24 and it quoted a forensic report on one of them, whom it named as Al Sayed Ali Abdallah.

EOHR said the methods of torture included electric shocks to the tongue, genitals and other parts of the body beating with leather whips and blunt and sharp instruments.

The statement suggested that the group believed the robberies might have been carried out by opposition groups to raise money.

"EOHR would like to reiterate its strong condemnation of the crimes of violence committed by armed opposition groups, whether these acts of violence are directed at political targets or involve the staging of armed burglaries to help finance the political activities of these groups," it said.

The group said it wrote to the interior minister on May 5 asking for information on allegations that Islamic groups had been involved in the robberies but had received no reply.

2,000 minors died in south Sudan of natural disasters

KHARTOUM (AP) — Over 2,000 minors died in rebel areas in south Sudan of natural disasters, such as floods, rains and hunger, the government said Saturday.

Ahmad Al Radi Jabir, the government rapporteur of the relief and displaced affairs, said 4,000 others managed to survive a journey from Etang, a rebel camp on the border with Ethiopia, to Nasir area, in northern upper Nile.

Mr. Jabir told reporters of Western news agencies that about 1,000 of the survivors have remained with their families.

The remaining 3,000 are now housed in a camp established around Nasir by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), he said, adding that he personally has paid a visit to one of the camps recently.

Nasir is a rebel-held town 800 kilometres south of Khartoum.

He said about 1,000 tonnes of relief grains, contributed by the government, were distributed to needy people in Sobat area near Nasir.

The government donation consisted of 400 tonnes of wheat and 600 tonnes of sorghum, both are produced locally, he said.

ICRC officials in Khartoum were not immediately available for comment.

The Sudanese Red Crescent said meanwhile that an estimated 50,000 minors are now in combat areas of south Sudan. The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army of John Garang controls almost all south Sudan except some besieged towns, including Juba, the capital of the south.

The rebels have been fighting the Muslim dominated government in Khartoum since 1983 for more autonomy, economic and administrative reforms for the Christian and animist south.

Tigani Ahmad Abul Gasim, head of the tracing unit at the Sudanese Red Crescent, said some of about 14,500 minors who are still in Nasir and other rebel-held areas were reunited but gave no details.

"We are coordinating with the ICRC to unite these children with their families," he said.

"But up to now, there was little success," he added.

He said the children were in rebel camps which disintegrated after the downfall of Ethiopia's strongman Mengistu Haile Mariam earlier this year.

The minors have been pouring into north Sudan since then, he said.

Ethiopia under Colonel Mengistu was the main backer of Col. Garang's SPLA. He provided the SPLA with territorial, military facilities as well as a radio station.

The ICRC has appealed to the warring sides to refrain from shelling the children camps.

Jabir meanwhile was quoted by the "Al Sudan Al Hadeeth" newspaper that he expects the influx of the minors to increase as of next February when the downpour of rains and floods ease.

The newspaper also quoted him as saying that only 4,000 out of 6,000 minors were able to make the trip to the south.

"The rest (2,000) got lost in the journey," he said.

New U.N. chief heads for New York to start work

CAIRO (R) — Boutros Ghali left for New York on Sunday to take over as the U.N. secretary-general, facing a mountain of problems but also a chance to shape the post-cold war world.

Dr. Ghali, one of the architects of Egypt's peace treaty with Israel in 1979, replaces Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru on Jan. 1.

The veteran diplomat told reporters at Cairo airport that he and senior U.N. officials would work out "a plan aimed at developing the United Nations so that it is equal to the new challenges."

Dr. Ghali, a Christian from a Muslim country with a wife of Jewish descent, added he would hold intensive consultations with Mr. Perez de Cuellar in the next few days and he hoped to continue to draw on the former chief's experience after the handover.

Asked how he would tackle the huge tasks facing the United Nations as the world rebuilds itself after the collapse of communism, Dr. Ghali said his approach would be "a lot of work, a lot of patience, and consultation with leaders inside and outside the United Nations."

The end of the cold war has eased the threat of a nuclear holocaust and given the United Nations a chance to tackle problems frozen for years by super-power rivalries, such as the civil wars in Cambodia and Afghanistan.

But dangerous new conflicts have erupted as the restraints of the old order have been lifted, as in Yugoslavia's vicious inter-ethnic fighting.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and its aftermath have also given the United Nations a mound of business which could take years to complete. The world body must ensure Baghdad never again acquires nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, oversee payment of war reparations, and deal with thousands of refugees.

Dr. Ghali promised when he was sworn in on Dec. 3 to follow "an active, preventive diplomacy."

He stressed the U.N. role in strengthening fundamental freedoms and democratic institutions but appealed to Third World nations by warning that democracy could not grow without economic development.

"If there is no development without democracy, there can also be no democracy without development," he declared in a speech in which he switched between Arabic, English and French, and apologised for not also using Chinese, Spanish or Russian, the U.N.'s other three official languages.



Boutros Ghali

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Russian vice-president collects one PoW from Afghan rebels

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan guerrillas handed a token Soviet soldier over to Russian Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi on Sunday after he accused them of failing to keep their promise to release prisoners of war.

Guerrilla sources and Pakistan's official APP news agency reported the handover at the end of a four-day visit in which Mr. Rutskoi held long bargaining sessions with guerrilla leaders for the release of some of an estimated 60 to 80 remaining Soviet captives.

Mr. Rutskoi, an Afghan war veteran, earlier told a news conference the Mujahadeen leaders had failed to keep promises made in Moscow last month to free captured Soviet soldiers.

A guerrilla spokesman named the freed man as Baba Qul or Habibullah, from Central Asia, but gave no other details.

Earlier, Russian sources said Habibullah was believed to be a deserter and Mr. Rutskoi's delegation was unwilling to take him. But guerrilla sources said he had been confused with another man whose handover had been discussed.

Four guerrilla leaders had pledged to free some captives in return for Soviet concessions. Mr. Rutskoi said he had kept his side of the bargain and a batch of prisoners should have been released by now.

He said his talks in Islamabad failed to take negotiations further because of rivalries among the Mujahadeen.

"I don't quite understand the position of the Mujahadeen," he said. "We had agreed the Mujahadeen should act jointly."

The Mujahadeen's Afghan News Agency said the four guerrilla leaders had promised Mr. Rutskoi they would free a batch of prisoners before Jan. 1.

Moscow, which withdrew its troops from Afghanistan in 1989 after a nine-year war to prop up the Marxist government in Kabul, has listed more than 300 soldiers as missing.

It is not known how many are still alive, or how many are deserters.

S. Arabia's religious police getting rougher

BAHRAIN (AP) — Operation Desert Storm drove away the Iraqi military menace, but also boosted the power of Saudi Arabia's religious police, Saudis and foreigners say.

Residents reported almost daily confrontations at shopping centres in Gulf-side Dhafran and in the capital Riyadh when the religious police or "mutawwa" harass women in the name of morality.

Even in the usually more liberal Red Sea city of Jeddah, where women are now covered with abayas, the traditional black cloaks, and private beaches have been banned, residents said.

None of the sources would agree to be quoted by name for fear of reprisals from the mutawwa.

Shopkeepers in Riyadh threatened to close down unless the continuous harassment of women customers were ended. Subsequently, unknown thugs beat up a number of mutawwa men, witnesses said.

They reported an unprecedented demonstration by hundreds of members of the religious police at the end of November, protesting the beatings at the Shula Supermarket.

They marched after their noon congregational prayer in the main downtown mosque to the office of Prince Salman, the governor of

Riyadh and brother of King Fahd.

The U.S. consulates in Jeddah, Riyadh and Dhafran have issued written guidelines to Americans on how to handle harassment by the religious fanatics, advising it is best to avoid confrontations.

But the bearded Muslim fundamentalists, whose name literally means "enforcers" of religious mores, appear to be on a confrontation path.

Several cases were reported of fanatics arresting drivers and their female passengers on charges of violating Islamic morality. "The rate is much higher than previous years," said one of the Saudis.

More than one traveller from Saudi Arabia related the story of a Saudi woman doctor in Riyadh who was racing to her stricken brother's bedside in a chauffeur car when stopped by the mutawwa.

Her entreaties brought no mercy and when she became agitated, they took her to a local mutawwa headquarters and lashed her. She was accused of being in "a secluded environment with a foreign male" — her expatriate driver.

A traveller from Dhafran reported that the mutawwa broke into a child's birthday party at a hotel set up by the parents for a

group of expatriate friends.

The mutawwa broke in with "much shouting, gesticulating and screaming that 'birthday parties are a Western abomination and do not have a place in Saudi Arabia,' the traveller said.

Saudi-based Arab and Western diplomats confirmed the accounts.

During the Gulf crisis, the stationing in Saudi Arabia of hundreds of thousands of U.S., British, French and other troops from societies the mutawwa condemn as decadent galvanised the religious police.

One of the incidents that incensed them was a protest "drive-in" by several dozen women. Saudi women are forbidden from driving.

The mutawwa, many of them young volunteers, were Saudi robes that stand out from the national dress in ending above the heels. They carry canes or clubs.

They ensure people stop for congregational prayers five times a day, not hesitating to beat those who don't. They poke at women's arms and legs if the limbs are not properly covered. They frown upon the sight of a woman in a car with a man. They swoop down regularly on video cassette shops.

They knock on doors of expatriates when they find a large number of cars parked nearby. They then dash inside to search for evidence to offences — bareheaded women, alcohol and the like.

The Kuwaiti daily Al Sayassah tackled the subject in two weeks this December, with publisher Ahmad Jarallah printing a letter he said he had received from unidentified Saudi citizen about the excesses of the mutawwa.

"I was in my car with my wife," said the letter. "A mutawwa inserted his head into the car window and yelled at my wife and myself, calling us shameless debauchees, only because my wife's head was not covered."

One Saudi notable complained to reporters that his wife once lifted her veil to get a better look at some cloth she was buying, when a mutawwa scolded her.

King Fahd has always advised the mutawwa, whose organisation is called the "Department of the Preservation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice," to enforce morality with wisdom and logic.

Many Saudis mock the work of the department, calling it "department of sheep" because of the indiscriminate harassment by the religious police. But they still fear the mutawwa zeal and the mystique that surrounds them.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Assad meets Iraqi opposition leader

DAMASCUS (R) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad met Iraqi Shiite opposition leader Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer Al Hakim Sunday, officials said. They said Sheikh Hakim, head of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), was heading a SCIRI delegation. Sheikh Hakim's group played a major role in a March rebellion in southern Iraq against the government following the Gulf war. A SCIRI statement said Sheikh Hakim would hold talks with Syrian officials and Iraqi opposition figures. Several Iraqi Kurdish and Islamic opposition groups including SCIRI have representative offices in Syria.

Hijacked Saudi tanker arrives in Jeddah

CAIRO (R) — An oil tanker commandeered by Somali gunmen 11 days ago has arrived in the Saudi Arabian port of Jeddah and the authorities appear to have ended the hijack, shipping sources said on Sunday. They said the crew of the 6,174-deadweight-tonne Sea Skipper had docked with the ship but they did not know what had happened to the gunmen, who took over the tanker demanding political asylum in Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt or Canada. The sources said on Saturday that 204 armed men seized the Sea Skipper, which is Saudi-owned but flies the Panamanian flag, in Mogadishu harbour on Dec. 11. Vicious tribal fighting in the Somali capital has killed some 4,000 people and injured at least 7,000 in recent weeks. The hijackers ordered the Indian captain to sail to Port Sudan where they made their demand for asylum. Sudanese authorities allowed 180 of them to land. The others forced the captain to sail to Jizan island off Jeddah. A Jeddah port official contacted by telephone said he had no information on the incident. Somalia, an impoverished desert country on the Horn of Africa, has been wracked by 11 months of anarchy which began after dictator Mohammad Siad Barre was ousted by rebels last January.

5 Kurdish rebels killed in clashes

ANKARA (AP) — Five Kurdish rebels were killed in a day-long clash with security forces in southeastern Turkey, semi-official Anatolia news agency reported. The agency said information provided by a rebel captured previously led security forces to the guerrillas at Solhan township in southeastern Bingol province. Kurdish separatist guerrillas have been waging war since 1984 to set up an independent Marxist Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey, where the borders of Iran, Iraq and Syria converge. There are about 12 million ethnic Kurds in Turkey, which has a population 59 million. More than 3,000 people, including soldiers, civilians and separatist insurgents have been killed in clashes between Kurdish rebels and Turkish security forces.

Hammer and sickle down in Tehran

NICOSIA (R) — The Russian tricolour was hoisted over the former Soviet embassy in Tehran Sunday, replacing the red hammer and sickle banner. The Iranian news agency IRNA said Tehran had been told in advance that Russia was taking over the embassy, following Thursday's announcement by Russian President Boris Yeltsin that he was taking control of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The hoisting of the Russian flag over the sprawling mission in Tehran brings back memories of a string of spectacular Iranian defeats at the hands of the Russian tsars. Under the Qajar Dynasty, the Persian empire signed a number of humiliating treaties obliging it to give up its territories in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Among Persian losses were Yerevan, now capital of Armenia, the Azeri capital of Baku, the Turkmen capital of Ashkhabad and the ancient cities of Samarkand and Bukhara in what is now Uzbekistan. IRNA said the Supreme National Security Council met on Saturday night and announced that Tehran was ready to recognise the independent republics emerging from the collapse of the Soviet Union.

U.S. fines oil firm for deal with Libyan agent

HOUSTON (R) — The U.S. Treasury Department fined Phibro Energy \$22.50 million for doing business with a Coastal Corporation affiliate identified as an agent of the Libyan government, a newspaper reported Saturday. The Houston Chronicle reported that Phibro received the fine after issuing a letter of credit to Holborn European Marketing Co. Ltd based in Cyprus. U.S. treasury officials said Phibro's fine was reduced because it alerted U.S. officials immediately after discovering its deal with Holborn, the paper reported. Phibro officials said the letter of credit to Holborn — used to buy German fuel oil — was supposed to be issued out to its London office, but said it was handled from its Greenwich, Connecticut, office, the paper said. Holborn was targeted by federal officials in August as one of dozens of firms controlled by Libya. For five years, U.S. trade with Libya has been banned as part of a widespread economic crackdown against Libya. The state-owned Libyan National Oil Co. acquired a controlling interest in Holborn and two other Coastal affiliates earlier this year. Houston-based Coastal continues to own one-third of Holborn and its sister companies, the paper reported. Coastal officials told the newspaper the company's part-ownership breaks no laws and that the Holborn business accounts for only a fraction of the energy company's total revenues.

Fleet of Pharaonic funeral boats found

CAIRO (R) — A dozen 5,000-year-old Pharaonic funeral boats have been unearthed in good condition in southern Egypt by a team of U.S. archaeologists, a Cairo newspaper reported Saturday. The fleet of wooden boats, lying side by side and in good condition, was found at a depth of nearly 30 metres near the Nile-side town of Sohag, 500 kilometres south of Cairo, the mass circulation daily Akhbar Al Yom said. It quoted a member of the University of Pennsylvania team as saying the vessels were about 500 years older than similar "solar boats" found in the 1950s near the Great Pyramid of Cheops at Giza, near Cairo. The researchers were to hold a news conference in the United States on Sunday to announce the find, described by Akhbar Al Yom as "the most important archaeological discovery of the 20th century." Ancient Egyptians buried solar boats with their kings, or pharaohs, as funeral vessels. They believed the monarchs needed two boats, one for day and another for night, for their voyage to the other world.

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the gift shop

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 coloured glass, various medals,
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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Les Retour de Bonheur
19:00	News in French
19:15	Weekly Sports Magazine
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Hey Dad
21:00	Nippon
22:00	News in English
22:30	Gabriels Fire
PRAYER TIMES	
04:54	Fajr
06:16	(Summer) Dhuhr
11:26	Dhuhr
14:12	'Asr
16:26	Maghreb
17:58	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweidieh Tel. 817070	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623451	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 626543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772061	
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 685356	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 628204, 649232	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675991	
WEATHER	
Bullshit supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Rains are expected in the various parts of the Kingdom and winds will be southeasterly from In. In Agaba, it will be dusty with southerly fresh and seas rough.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	3 / 12
Agaba	6 / 19
Deserts	-2 / 13
Jordan Valley	8 / 18

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Adel Dahdoub	612177
Dr. Nidal Dabbab	692625
Dr. Hisham Kanaan	790286
Dr. Mohammad Manaa	741444
First pharmacy	661912
Foreign pharmacy	716336
Al Asmaa pharmacy	637055
Natroukhi pharmacy	623672
Al Salan pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shweissel pharmacy	637650
BERD:	
Dr. Ali Al Samman	(-)
Dr. Al Sharaa pharmacy	759225
ZARQA:	
Dr. Mofeed Damm	(-)

Khalef pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Rescue	199
Fire Brigade	192, 621111, 637777
Blood Bank	715121
Highway Police	943402
Traffic Police	696390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	697467
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Abdali Telephone Repair	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111

Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
Rail Flight Information	68-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport	68-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Haram Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	644281/6
Alkhalid Maternity, J. Amn.	642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	643652
Mathias J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845045
Al-Musabbir Hospital	667271/9
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664164/6
Italian, Al-Mubajres	77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Adanafeh	775117/5
Army, Marja	891617/5
Queen Alia Hospital	662340/50
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)903560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)990990
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:00	Sanaa (RJ)
09:00	Damascus (RJ)
09:15	Riyadh (RJ)
09:15	Jeddah (RJ)

08:15	Dhafran (RJ)
09:00	Larnaca (RJ)
09:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:30	Beirut (RJ)
10:30	Bangkok (RJ)
11:00	Cairo (RJ)
11:30	Istanbul (RJ)
11:30	Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
11:30	Yerevan (RJ)
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	950 / 600
Banana	500 / 450
Banana (Makassar)	500 / 300
Beans	450 / 380
Cabbage	150 / 100
Carrots	220 / 160
Cauliflower	220 / 170
Cucumbers (large)	250 / 160
Cucumbers (small)	200 / 140
Eggplant	200 / 140
Garlic	750 / 650
Grapefruit	180 / 120
Grapes	900 / 800
Guava	300 / 480
Lemon	180 / 120
Marrow (large)	150 / 100
Marrow (small)	120 / 80
Onions	300 / 200
Onions (dry)	170 / 120
Oranges	400 / 150
Pepper (hot)	340 / 220
Pepper (sweet)	380 / 220
Potato	320 / 260
Sage	600 / 500
Spinach	150 / 100
Tomatoes	400 / 350
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:15	Beirut (RJ)
11:30	Montreal New York (RJ)
11:40	Istanbul (RJ)
12:15	London (RJ)
12:45	Frankfurt (RJ)
13:00	Cairo (RJ)
13:00	Yerevan (RJ)
14:30	Moscow (RJ)
20:30	Bahama, Doha (RJ)
20:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
21:15	Muscat (RJ)

Industrial chamber president reelected

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian industrialists have elected a new 12-member board for the Amman Chamber of Industry led by Khalid Abu Hassan, who retained his post as president for a second term.

Altogether, 720 industrialists took part in the voting Saturday at the Amman Chamber of Industry headquarters on Jabal Amman. Chamber sources said that voting lasted from 8 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., when the ballot boxes were closed.

The new board members, who will serve during the 1992-95 period, belong to Mr. Abu Hassan's "Industrial Family Bloc," except for Isam Budeir, who represents the Industrial Alliance Bloc.

Mr. Abu Hassan received 579 votes while Mr. Budeir, who heads his bloc, received 330 votes.

The other winners were Ziyad Al Himsi, Marwan Khirfan, Ahmad Al Taher, Abdul Halim Abideen, Inad Al Shammaa, Abdullah Warayat, Mahmoud Hijawi, Abdul Nour Hababeh, Hassan Al Mifteh and Abdul Ilah Al Tabba.

Fourteen other members, 12 from the Alliance Bloc, and two independents had nominated themselves as candidates for the board.



JERUSALEM AFFAIRS UPDATE — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday received in his office a delegation representing the Jerusalem-based Higher Islamic Committee and the Council of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs in Arab Jerusalem. The delegation conveyed to Sharif Zeid the best wishes of the Awqaf Department in Jerusalem and their congratulations to him on his appointment as prime minister. The delegation also briefed Sharif Zeid on the conditions of Islamic Waqf in Jerusalem, particularly Al Aqsa Mosque and the situations of people attending

Islamic Waqf in the holy Arab city. The prime minister voiced the government's concern to provide all means capable of helping the Palestinian people in the occupied territories resist attempts to uproot them. He also pledged the government's support to enable them to attend to their sacred duties in safeguarding Islamic Waqf. The meeting was attended by Minister of State for the Prime Ministry Affairs Ibrahim Izzeddin and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi.

Ministry seeking cooperation in effort to upgrade educational system, official says

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Education welcomes cooperation with academic institutions in Jordan to conduct research work designed to promote the educational process and deal with issues in that field, announced Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thouqan Al Hindawi Sunday.

At present, the ministry is maintaining close cooperation with educationists and academics working in Jordanian universities to help carry out the resolutions of the 1987 Educational Conference to enrich the educational process in the Kingdom, the minister said in an address read on his behalf by Dr. Izzat Jaradat from the Ministry of Education.

The address was delivered at the opening of an educational workshop organized in conjunc-



Thouqan Al Hindawi

tion with the Amman-based regional office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

In his address, the minister said that the workshop aims at pooling the expertise of the researchers and experts to help put the ministry's plans for overhauling the educational process into force.

The 1987 resolutions called for a change of the ministry's schools textbooks, training teachers and ending the double-shift school system among other suggestions. UNESCO representative Salah Yaqoub told the opening session that research and innovation in education was of vital importance in an age of fast developments witnessing wealth of new information, particularly in the advanced nations.

Mr. Yaqoub stressed the importance of education in helping societies to raise their standards and to attain progress in social,

industrial and cultural fields.

He said that UNESCO was striving to help promote the level of education in a manner that would help nations face the requirements of the 21st century.

Several working papers will be reviewed by the three-day workshop dealing with educational research in Jordan, studies and research centres in relation to education and the needs of the ministry's plans to develop the educational process in the Kingdom.

Representatives of the ministries of education, higher education, planning and Jordanian universities as well as others from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and UNESCO are taking part in the meetings.

PSD reports 317 drug trafficking operations broken up

AMMAN (Petra) — The Public Security Department (PSD) dealt with 171 drug trafficking cases between Jan. 1 and Nov. 30 this year, arresting 317 persons involved in the drug trafficking operations, Brigadier Izzeddin Zaza, the PSD's Anti-narcotics Department director said Sunday.

These smugglers were found to have in their possession 4,943 kilos of hashish, 20 kilos of heroin, two kilos of opium, 768,747 captagon pills as well as 322 saplings of cannabis used in the manufacture of drugs, Brig. Zaza said in a statement on the eve of Arab Police Day, which is normally observed by Jordan and other Arab countries.

The PSD plans to hold a ceremony Tuesday in observance of the day during which several persons from the security services and the police will be honoured for distinguished service in matters related to security and community protection.

According to Brig. Zaza, the police in Jordan have seized 25 pistols and five automatic rifles being smuggled into the country during the past 11 months. He said that the smugglers claimed that the weapons were on their way to other Arab countries neighbouring Jordan.

Referring to counterfeit currency, Brig. Zaza said that in the wake of the Gulf crisis the police in Jordan seized \$201,958, 3,605

Kuwait dinars, 378,450 Iraqi dinars and other unspecified amounts of currency, all counterfeit.

Brig. Zaza said that Jordan's central geographic location makes it prone to smugglers' operations moving from one Arab country to another.

He said smuggling and drug trafficking operations have increased lately, mainly due to the rise in the price of drugs in countries where people consume them and also in view of economic hardships which render people either unemployed or looking for some trade, he said.

Brig. Zaza said his department had made major successes over the past years in curtailing illicit

operations, seizing contraband merchandise and apprehending smugglers.

Brig. Zaza said, the number of drug addicts in the Kingdom is almost negligible. The addicts are mostly Jordanian students who had been receiving education in foreign countries, he said.

Drug addicts will have charges against them dropped if they proved to be willing to undergo treatment or if relatives report the cases to the police requesting help in their rehabilitation, he said.

The PSD, Brig. Zaza added, keeps all information about addicts in strict confidence to allow them an incentive to not return to the habit.

Special department created at Ministry of Agriculture to address problems in field

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Agriculture recently created a special department to deal with agricultural affairs in the Kingdom, according to department Director Walid Abed Rabbo.

A clear agricultural policy for Jordan has been called for by the various seminars and conferences because the lack of it has been blamed for most of the country's agricultural woes, Dr. Abed Rabbo said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

In an address to a symposium held Dec. 4 in Amman Minister of Agriculture Fayez Khasawneh admitted that Jordan lacks a definite agricultural policy.

Dr. Khasawneh also told a seminar by veterinarians Tuesday that agricultural development in Jordan was in need of a clear strategy that can ensure continued implementation of programmes.

The lack of such policy has been the chief cause of problems encountered by the agricultural sector despite past efforts to boost production, the minister was quoted as saying.

According to Dr. Abed Rabbo, an agricultural strategy can take care of the country's dealings at the national, regional and international levels. An agricultural strategy is needed to rectify the agricultural sector's course and

enable it to meet the needs of the nation, Dr. Abed Rabbo said.

The strategy, to be worked out by the newly created department, would cover such matters as production, types of lands for agricultural production and socio-economic development of farmers and people involved in this sector, he said.

One of the issues to be tackled in this respect, Dr. Abed Rabbo added, is the continued encroachment of urban areas on agricultural land.

The Higher Agricultural Council in 1989 decided to establish a unit at the Ministry of Agriculture to take charge of the country's agricultural policy. The German government expressed readiness to back such an endeavour, Dr. Abed Rabbo noted. He said that Germany had promised to supply expertise, training and equipment.

Dr. Abed Rabbo said that the department aims at offering assistance to decision-makers at the Ministry of Agriculture and the agricultural sector.

The department, he said, has already embarked on defining its aims, the current problems facing agriculture and a study on internal and external circumstances that influence the country's agricultural sector.



JUST REWARD — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday conferred upon the former secretary general of the Ministry of Agriculture, Sami Sunna, Jordan's Al Kawkab Medal of the Second Order in appreciation of his dedicated service over 33 years. Agriculture Minister Fayez Khasawneh decorated Dr. Sunna with the medal in a special ceremony held at the ministry Sunday. The Cabinet recently agreed to pension Dr. Sunna from the Ministry at his request to assume a new post at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA). Dr. Sunna is currently head of the joint Political Department between FAO and ESCWA.

UNRWA performance in 1991 praised

AMMAN (J.T.) — The return of thousands of Palestinians from Kuwait during 1991 added strain on the resources of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), especially in Jordan and Gaza, and increased the hardships and suffering of the Palestinian refugees, according to UNRWA Commissioner General Izzat Turkmen.

"This past year has been full of

danger and challenge for the agency but there are signs of hope with the Middle East peace talks starting and an improvement in the situation in Lebanon, said Mr. Turkmen in a 1992 new year's message released by the UNRWA Amman office Friday.

On the other hand, UNRWA staff have dealt with a host of emergency situations in 1991.

Jordanian, Australian university officials establishing student exchange programme

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan and Australia are in the process of signing an agreement that would establish an exchange of university staff and students.

Included in the agreement would be joint research projects and teaching materials between Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia, and Jordan and Yarmouk Universities in the Kingdom, according to Professor Wil-

liam Logan, dean of the Faculty of Arts at Deakin University.

Australia, opening its doors to overseas students and teachers, is home to almost half a million Arabs, mainly Lebanese, Egyptians, Palestinians and Jordanians.

"The university has the biggest range of programmes for Arabic speaking countries," Professor Logan told the Jordan Times.

There is a double degree programme in Arabic and Business that is designed to educate the

new generation of business people in Australia "and that would enable more effective trade with the Middle East," he said.

"We also have a postgraduate programme in interpreting from English to Arabic and we train bilingual teachers," Professor Logan said.

Australian students will also be studying in Jordan "to gain more experience in the culture of the Middle East," he said. Already there is a tentative agreement for two Anglo-Saxon women students to study at Yarmouk University.

Professor Logan said that the exchange agreement with Jordan and with other parts of the region is considered important, mainly for business reasons. "This region is an important trading block," he said. "The Arab states export oil to Australia while we export agricultural products to the Middle East and that will become even more important."

He added that the Middle East is obviously strategically impor-

tant and that aside from Australians' interest in Arabic, "we are concerned about the Palestinian issue."

Professor Logan has met with university officials as well as some heads of departments. "The main thing we are looking for is how we can make these exchange active," he said. "We spoke (with university officials) about creating specific programmes because students vacations between the two countries do not fit well," he said.

Accompanying Professor Logan is lecturer in charge of Arabic, Abdel Hakam Kasem. "We have created a new centre for Arabic and Middle Eastern studies," Mr. Kasem.

This would encourage research, organising conferences and short courses in history and language, he said.

The centre will begin operations early next year. "Our ambition is to make it the main centre for Arabic and Middle Eastern studies," Mr. Kasem said.



CHARITY BAZAAR OPENED — University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharaibeh Sunday opened a charity bazaar organised by the Nursing College to help needy students attending the university and poor families in Baqa Camp. The bazaar includes embroidery, handicrafts, traditional costumes, flowers, artificial flowers, posters, children's toys, pictures and traditional dishes.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent congratulates Japanese emperor

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday sent a cable to Japan's Emperor Aki Hito congratulating him on his birthday and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the Japanese people further progress and prosperity.

Bakht appointed university president

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal decree has been issued appointing Mohammad Adnan Al Bakht as University of Mutah president, succeeding Dr. Awad Khleifat, who was appointed Minister of Higher Education. Dr. Bakht, who holds a doctorate degree in Islamic History from London University, was the University of Jordan's vice-president for Humanitarian Faculties Affairs. He has written many books and was selected as a member of the Royal Commission for Formulating the National Charter.

JORDAN RIVER DESIGNS

Christmas Bazaar

17-24 December 1991

10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

At Philadelphia Int'l Hotel

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U.N. Charter needs revision

THE NEW commonwealth of 11 former Soviet republics proclaimed at the end of the historic Alma Ata summit is clearly the heir to what so far has been known as the Soviet Union. However, the transition from the former communist state to the new structure of independent states will not be smooth or strewn with roses. One of the first questions facing the new republics is what to do with the Soviet Union's permanent seat at the U.N. Security Council and other U.N. bodies. Russian leader Boris Yeltsin has recently admitted that the new political constellation "is not a state and therefore it can have no citizenship." Based on international law it is now clear that the new order formed on the ashes of the Soviet Union is not a nation-state that may qualify for an independent and separate identity for United Nations purposes. Accordingly, the new political structures that emerged at the conclusion of the Alma Ata meeting is not the same as the Soviet Union in order to qualify for its permanent seat at the Security Council and elsewhere where Moscow had traditionally enjoyed permanent place.

Against this backdrop, the leaders of the new system of government have inclined in favour of requesting that the Russian Federation be designated as the state successor of the defunct Soviet Union. But this is easier said than done. True the Russian Republic constitutes a nation-state for the purposes of U.N. membership, but it is not true that the Russian regime is the state successor of the collapsed Soviet Union in order to qualify for automatic membership as a permanent member of the Security Council. The Soviet Union was a founder member of the United Nations and its makeup, weight and clout are anything but similar to the existing Russian state. In this sense, there is a crisis looming right now at the United Nations over what to do with Moscow's permanent seat in the Security Council. Far from being clear-cut or automatic, the United Nations may not by any stretch of imagination bestow on the Russian government an automatic permanent seat in the main U.N. body concerned with the maintenance of peace and stability in the world. There is no escape therefore from convening an international conference in order to revise the United Nations Charter in a bid to grant the Russian regime a permanent seat. There is no other lawful way that such an issue can be dealt with assuming that the international community and the big powers on the international scene are going to be supportive to such an idea in the first place. And once the Pandora box is open and the U.N. Charter becomes subject of specific review, then the stage is set for the consideration of other proposed amendments aiming at correcting the existing imbalance in the Security Council with a view to making it more realistically representative of the major powers in the world. On top of the list of would-be permanent members of the council could be Japan and Germany. In this sense, it is high time that a review conference be convened as a matter of highest urgency to address not only the future of the Moscow seat but also the future role of new major powers such as Japan and Germany.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE WASHINGTON peace talks ended inconclusively, with no fixed date for their resumption... a sign that no breakthrough will be expected unless the U.S. administration chooses to interfere effectively and influence the course of the negotiations, said Al Rai' Arabic daily Sunday. The outcome of the Washington meetings clearly indicates that it is Israel, and not the United States, which has reaped the benefits of the end of the cold war and that it is Israel which stood to gain most with the crushing of the Iraqi military might, the paper said. It said that if the United States administration chooses to remain impassive during the next round of negotiations, then it is not only President Gorbachev who is being scrapped, but rather the president of the United States who will fall under the repeated blows of the Zionist lobby. Should the peace process fail, said the paper, the United States will be the prime loser and world Zionism the major winner, the paper added. The first round of bilateral talks in Washington came to a halt simply because the U.S. administration, which had refused to allow the Europeans to have a say in the negotiations and excluded the Soviet Union from any influence over the parties, remained passive to Israel's intransigence and obstinacy, the paper continued. Should world Zionism have the upper hand, the paper said, then it would be a Zionist legitimacy and not an American legitimacy or a new world order that is being imposed on the fate of the world. But, the paper said, should the U.S. administration show its true intention and desire to give justice and international legitimacy a chance, it would have to force the Israelis to comply with the will of the United Nations and implement Security Council resolutions that can end occupation and give the Palestinians their legitimate rights in their homeland.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily dwelt on the role of UNICEF as a world organisation concerned with the well-being of children regardless of their nationality and geographic location. Ahmad Dabbas said this organisation had appealed to the world for a \$85 million as urgent need to buy food and medicine for the Iraqi children, but it failed to achieve the goal. UNICEF representative here, Nigel Fisher, has expressed regret over the failure to raise this vital donation and said the organisation can by no means come up with the necessary funds to finance such vital task to save the life of starving and sick children in Iraq, the writer pointed out. He said such expression of sympathy and good feelings can by no means absolve UNICEF of the blame for the failure to come to the aid of the destitute children now facing death. UNICEF is called on to free itself from American hegemony and carry out its humanitarian task as entrusted to it in the U.N. charter, and should provide urgent assistance to the sick and starving children facing a plight resulting from the American-led aggression on the Iraqi people, said the writer.

Weekly Political Pulse

Do they want peace or not?

NO sooner had the Israeli-inspired wrangling over the date of the second-stage negotiations between it and the Arab parties was resolved in its favour than another bickering, once again manipulated and orchestrated by Israel, erupted over the separate rooms being set for the Jordanian and Palestinian negotiating teams. Tel Aviv appears to still insist that the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation must be assigned only one conference room to maintain the semblance of unity between the two Arab teams even though everyone knows, including Israel, that the joint delegation will have to split up into two negotiating teams in view of the collectively agreed-upon formula of assigning two separate agendas for each side. Again Israel is splitting hairs over issues that would not determine the outcome of the projected peace talks on the Middle East. By maintaining its petty stance, the Israeli government of Yitzhak Shamir is confirming over and over again that it seeks to delay consideration of substantive issues for as long as necessary in order to tire out all the parties concerned. And when the late-arriving Israeli negotiation teams took issue with the mandate of the Washington's peace parleys by insisting that they have been charged with the task of discussing only procedural matters rather than substantive subjects, the Washington stage for negotiations was rendered an exercise in futility. In this vein, the head of the Israeli delegation served notice on all parties, including the U.S., the host country, that his delegation will not extend its stay in the American capital beyond Wednesday since they are there only to discuss the venue of the

next meetings.

Such persistent Israeli manipulation of the Arab-Israeli peace talks, with a view to reducing them to futile exercises, requires a firm response from the U.S. before the conditions of the talks deteriorate into an unredeemable impasse. It must be obvious to the U.S. by now that Mr. Shamir is bent on degrading the serious and bona fide efforts aiming at resolving once and for all the Arab-Israeli conflicts in all their dimensions. With the other co-host country, the Soviet Union, lying on its death bed, the focus of the international attention is clearly directed to U.S. President George Bush and his team to save the painstakingly arranged peace talks from a sudden collapse. If there was ever an occasion for the Bush administration to make its weight felt and its voice heard, it was in the U.S. capital where the Arab sides were making a genuine effort to commence substantive and meaningful talks with Israel.

Now that the issue over how to proceed with the negotiations with the Palestinian side remained unresolved, and Israeli-Jordanian peace talks continued, as a result, to be held in abeyance, there is a genuine fear that the faith and confidence of the Arab side in the U.S.-brokered peace talks would dissipate in no time rendering the overall climate that much more sceptical and negative. And when one adds the gloom that still surrounds the Syrian-Israeli peace discussions, the picture that emerges from the Washington peace talks is one of despondency and dejection. What all such negative developments in the peace process could

mean for the security and stability of the Middle East region and beyond is something that calls for early assessment and reckoning. It is a foregone conclusion that the early beneficiaries of any persistent deadlock in the quest for a just, durable peace in the area would be the forces of extremism who would readily remind all that the policies of those who championed the peace process are bankrupt to the core and are irredeemable for all intents and purposes. Of course, they would not have to look far to substantiate and vindicate their protestations against the U.S.-led peace talks. Suffice to quote verse and chapter from the Israeli prime minister's most recent pronouncements, on the eve and in the wake of the peace talks, that Israel is not about to yield one inch of Arab territories, especially in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the future is being held up, till a future date, only God knows, when.

One has to be awfully naive to expect the ongoing process to produce much without the active involvement of the U.S. If Washington has also prescribed to the Israeli request for a U.S. handoff policy, then there is no point in pursuing the peace process one day longer. This calls for a most direct question from the Arab side to be put before the highest authorities in Washington, and, in turn, requires a most direct answer. Unless and until such information is forthcoming, the peace parleys would simply enter a dark alley from which it may never extricate itself.

U.S. President Bush gets the message that economy hurting him

By Steve Holland
Reuters

WASHINGTON — President George Bush has finally gotten the message that the stalled U.S. economy is hurting him badly and is struggling to convince the American people that he can solve the problem.

"We're aware of the problem, we feel its effect and we're going to do something about it," said a senior administration official.

Until this week Mr. Bush had maintained a go-slow approach, reflecting arguments from top advisers that the economy is fundamentally sound and low interest rates and low inflation will cause it to bloom again eventually.

The abrupt change in strategy — from easy-does-it to an open admission that times are tough — came to the fore on Tuesday, a day after Samuel Skinner took over as White House chief of staff from John Sununu, a combative man who believed in shielding Mr. Bush from bad news.

New public opinion polls showing the president with the lowest approval rating since he entered the White House nearly three years ago reinforced what he has been hearing from outsiders ranging from heads of fortune 500 corporations to blue-collar workers.

Administration spokesman Martin Fitzwater signalled the change in approach in telling reporters that the economy was "recession-like."

"The people of this country know that the economy is in trouble and it doesn't make any sense to play games," he said.

NEWS ANALYSIS

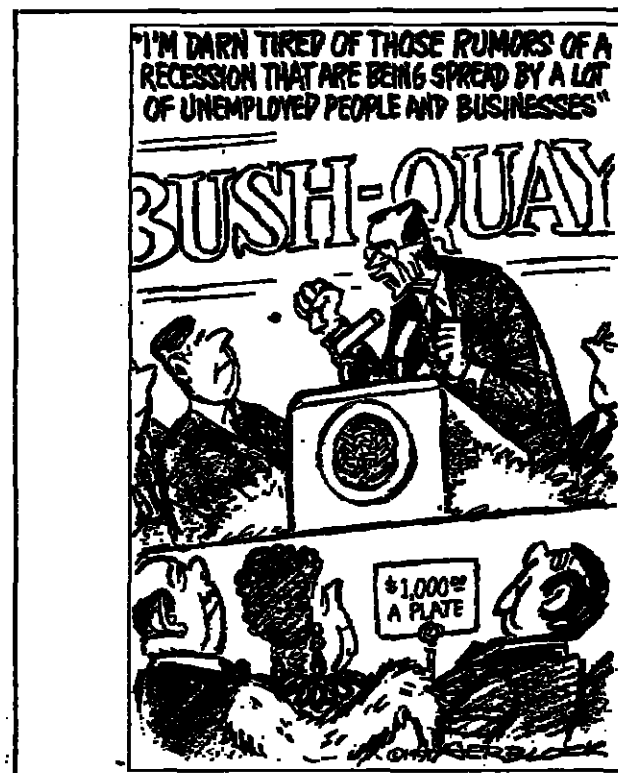
Mr. Bush said in a television interview that he would no longer quibble about whether the economy was in recession because he preferred to "get on with the business at hand" of ridding the country of hard times.

"What we're saying is: we are trying to help. And we've got to get this country doing better," Mr. Bush said in interviews with affiliates of the ABC television network.

Mr. Bush said he could "guarantee" an economic recovery "if I am effective in getting through the Congress the proposals I will pose to them at the state of the union" address in January.

Mr. Bush's popularity has been in free-fall in the polls simultaneous with the economic downturn after he achieved 90 per cent approval ratings during the Gulf war.

A senior official said Mr. Bush realises he must come up with an economic programme to rally



people behind him because simply admitting the problem and promising to fix it is not enough.

"Unfortunately, that's not what gets the people saying 'great going,'" the official said.

The White House is sticking to a timetable of Mr. Bush presenting a broad economic action plan

on Jan. 28 in his annual State of the Union address.

But it is trying to show that Mr. Bush is not standing still in the meantime.

He will be in Dallas on Wednesday to sign a \$151 billion transportation bill that is supposed to create two million jobs in six

years. From Dec. 30 to Jan. 10, he will be touring Australia, Singapore, South Korea and Japan in a trip now being touted as an effort to expand foreign markets for U.S. exports. Last month he postponed the trip fearing the perception he was spending too much time on foreign affairs.

Mr. Bush has always struggled with a perception problem due to his roots as a wealthy preppy aristocrat. He has never been able to shed the image in spite of his years as a Texas oilman.

Former President Richard Nixon recently advised Mr. Bush that he and Vice President Dan Quayle should not be photographed so frequently playing golf and tennis.

In remarks on Tuesday by telephone hook up to a New Hampshire education meeting, Mr. Bush stressed he sympathised with the state's economic distress and was not standing pat.

"Your state is suffering and I know it. I can feel it. In a sense, I'm a neighbour there. But I believe we just have to stay involved in the shortest run possible to help people who are hurting," he said.

Once he lays out his State of the Union economic plan, Mr. Bush is expected to travel across the country in an effort to drum up popular support for his proposals.

Administration aides admit Mr. Bush has a communications problem because when he identifies strong elements in the economy, he is seen as being out of touch with people who are suffering.

"It is a tough and delicate line," White House Communications Director David Demarest said in a recent interview.

One of a group of real estate executives who met Mr. Bush earlier this month said Mr. Bush complained to them about the perception problem that if he says stay the course, people say he is out of touch with reality.

"We told him what you need to do is be realistic because your credibility is important, and come out with a programme to do something about it," said Ernest Randall, president of the National Association of Industrial and Office Parks.

Mr. Bush's problems are compounded by rigid constraints on his room for manoeuvre. Cutting taxes to stimulate the economy risks increasing the deficit — which could drive interest rates up, choking off borrowing needed to fuel a recovery.

On top of the economic dilemma he faces, Mr. Bush must steer any economic initiatives through a Congress controlled by the Democratic opposition, who are intent on unseating him in the 1992 election.

Joining the flock

By Nobuhisa Honjo

The following article is reprinted from the Japanese magazine Look Japan.

AT first glance, allegations that the Japanese lack religious faith seem to be accurate. The shoe most certainly fit left-leaning intellectuals, who, influenced by Marx, typically reject religion as no better than superstition. Other factors contributing to their apparent lack of faith include the military government's use of Shinto to whip up patriotism during World War II, a heritage which has bred wariness of that ancient native religion. Buddhism is no more attractive; priests marry, eat meat, and drink alcohol, in defiance of the religion's ban, and intellectuals consider running a temple less an expression of religious faith than a lucrative job in the funeral business.

Among the wider population too, Shinto and Buddhism fail to inspire religious fervor. Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples are little more than the traditional venues for consecrating marriages, births, funerals, and the New Year. This year 80 million Japanese made a New Year's pilgrimage to a temple or a shrine, but few among them would consider themselves faithful.

To conclude, however that the Japanese are completely lacking in religious faith would be premature. While traditional religions remain static, new ones are establishing large followings through active proselytising. It is estimated that between 10 and 20 per cent of the population professes faith in the new religion or another.

Japan calls this phenomenon the Third Religious Awakening. The first coincided with the Meiji Restoration of 1868, when the Tokugawa Shogunate was overthrown, imperial rule restored, and a modern state created. The uprooting of the centuries-old, samurai-dominated political, economic, and social systems inspired anxiety in the population, which turned to religion for reassurance. The second happened amidst the turbulence following

World War II; Japan's defeat turned the population against pre-war values.

The common factor in these revivals was social crisis: both occurred during periods which saw permanent-seeming systems overthrown and long-held values suddenly made irrelevant. The resulting vacuum left people without guiding principles, and great numbers turned to religion to fill it.

Today's revival has similar origins. Unable to deliver on its promises, Marxism has toppled in country after country. The philosophy that once held great sway

with Japan's young is now an object of derision, with no new ideology poised to supplant it. Moreover, Japan's populace, more than satisfied in its material wants, is turning its attention to higher rewards. Like Western hippies in the 1960s whose affluence allowed them to reject their parents' lifestyles and leave mainstream society in search of spiritual fulfillment, today's Japanese youth can afford to dedicate themselves to new religious orders.

The most popular new religions add to their ceremonies such mystical flourishes as spell-casting, supernatural powers, and occult rituals. This mysticism offers adherents a way to transform themselves from ordinary people to higher beings.

Due to its astounding growth, the Institute for Research in Human Happiness, better known simply as the Science of Happiness, has received the most attention. Founded in 1986 with four members, it had converted 4,000 by 1988. By the end of 1991, its followers numbered nearly five million, and the group hopes 10 million of Japan's 123 million people will be members by the end of 1992.

The Science of Happiness' proselytising success is due to its large and well-conceived advertising campaigns in television, radio, newspapers and magazines. The institute retains Japan's largest ad agency, and spends a total of 7.5 billion yen (\$58 million) on advertising each year. Moreover, its founder Ryuhō Okawa's more than 100 books, which are, he says, collaborative efforts with higher spirits, have sold 27 million copies.

Since the discrediting of Marxism, which purported to predict the future in scientific terms,

many Japanese have turned to spiritualists and prophets for clues about the future. Moreover, Nostradamus predicted the world would end in 1999, and many Japanese are hedging their bets. The cold war is over, the international community is groping toward a new world order, and there is uncertainty about the future of the world over. History has shown that, in periods of instability, the anxious seek help from those calling themselves prophets and servants of God. No matter what the future holds for the rest of us, the outlook for the new religions is bright indeed.

LETTERS

Wingless Hermes

To the Editor:

I usually hesitate to criticise anything when I am a visitor in a country but I am, for the first time in twenty years experience in international marketing, driven to register a complaint in the hope that it might improve matters.

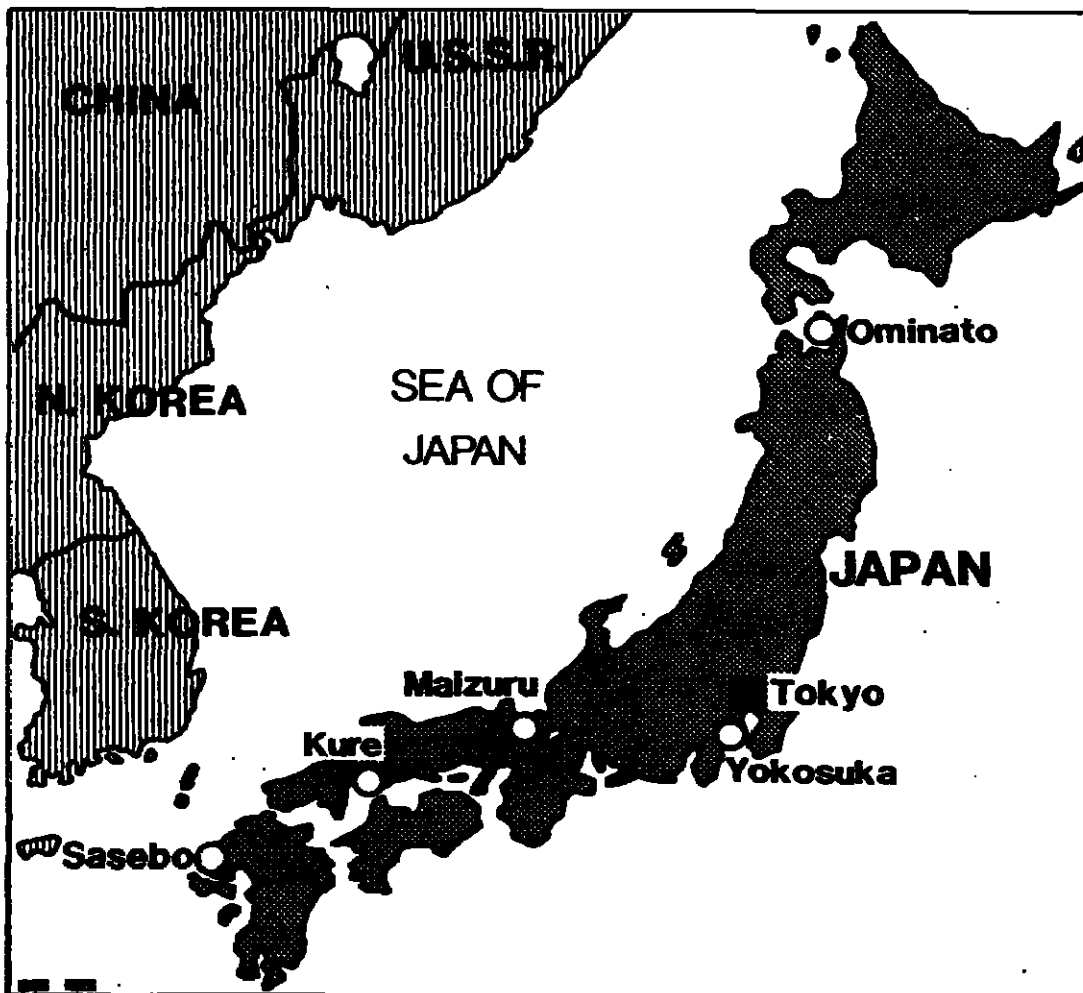
The sad state of Jordanian mail services throughout 1991 is such as to make Amman as a base for a regional office increasingly unworkable. My company, unlike many foreign ones, has been here for 15 unbroken years, but in order to trade with the world outside Jordan we require a reliable postal service. Receiving, as I have throughout the year, visit letters franked in Europe during up to six months before is appalling.

For an unacceptably long time we have been incurring increased costs using a courier service to compensate for the unpredictable mail service, but this is not tenable in a longer term. To improve the mail service surely would not require any capital expenditure but only better management of existing staff, or employment of more staff (thus reducing the unemployment level).

The sum total of my experience over the past 18 months in Jordan makes me hesitate to recommend Amman as a regional base for any company.

N. Craig,
P.O. Box 926438,
Amman, Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



Nosair acquitted of murder

(Continued from page 1)

our was planted by the real killers. His lawyers said that Kahane was killed by dissident members of the JDL over a feud about missing money that was supposedly to fund a seminary in Israel.

"There was no witness that saw Nosair shoot Meir Kahane," said civil rights lawyer William Kunstler, who defended Mr. Nosair.

Gorbachev

(Continued from page 1)

troops, but Russian President Boris Yeltsin has won ultimate control over the nuclear button.

When asked about what kind of man he found Mr. Yeltsin to be, Gorbachev replied: "I think the phenomenon of Yeltsin is still to be revealed... we hope he is fully aware of the great responsibility on his shoulders... he still has yet to understand that."

"I wish he could always be consistent... I wish he were more democratic. I wouldn't hurt him."

Mr. Gorbachev said he had been offered posts at various U.S. universities and had received "serious and interesting proposals" as well from Japan, Germany and France.

"I will try to combine them with my political and social activities here," Mr. Gorbachev said. But he made clear he had no intention of leaving the country.

"First of all, I was born in this country. I have lived and will live here. I have no plans to break with this country, particularly at a time like this," Mr. Gorbachev said.

Mr. Gorbachev conceded he made mistakes as he pushed the Soviet union towards a more open society with a free-market economy.

"The system had to change and to change the system is hard... I must tell you I do not call into question the choice of fundamental reform. As for the fact that it was accompanied by a severe worsening of people's everyday life, I think it was not without miscalculations," he said.

Questioned about U.S. policy towards the changing Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev said he found President George Bush and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to be "realistically-minded politicians."

But he added: "... If you take a closer look at the nuances and the niceties, it wasn't only us who made miscalculations."

He did not elaborate on his views of U.S. policies.

On Saturday, a senior U.S. official said the United States is "very satisfied" with the accord reached in Kazakhstan to dissolve the Soviet Union and form the new commonwealth.

with two other lawyers. He said he would appeal the convictions.

"The jury has spoken. We are preparing sentencing," said Assistant District Attorney William Greenbaum, who prosecuted the case. He declined further comment.

Mr. Nosair came to the United States from Egypt in 1981 and became a citizen in 1989.

He was born in Port Fouad, Egypt, a small city a few kilometers from Port Said. His father, Abdul Aziz Nosair Al Masri, is a retired naval construction worker.

The courtroom was guarded by more than 36 court officers, an unprecedented security detail, when the verdict was announced.

After the jury announced its decision and had been ushered from the courtroom, Kahane's supporters wept hysterically, and shouted, "nekoma," the Hebrew word for revenge.

"A Jew was murdered by them," said one Kahane supporter, pointing to Mr. Nosair's supporters.

Then, pointing to the empty jury box, he said, "that was no jury of our peers."

"We will continue to demand that justice be done against the murderer of Rabbi Kahane, may his blood be avenged," said Baruch Marzel, spokesman for Kahane's Kach movement.

"We know that if justice is not done, then a Jew will rise up who will do justice in this matter," Mr. Marzel added in an interview with Israel Radio.

Another Kach spokesman Noam Kach, said on army radio, "I am sure there are good Jews in the United States who, if justice is not done as it should, will not let the matter pass quietly."

Asked what he meant, Mr. Federman said, "They can certainly see to it that justice is done."

"In what way?" the reporter persisted.

"In every way," Mr. Federman replied.

Shamir: Israeli goal peace for peace

(Continued from page 1)

ter and we hope that during the second meeting in Washington we'll be able to convince the Arab side (that) to be more efficient, it's better to negotiate here around the Middle East and even in Europe," Mr. Katzav told reporters after a weekly cabinet meeting.

The bilateral talks, which adjourned in Washington last week, are to resume there on Jan. 7.

Israel's talks with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian team, Lebanon and Syria have been plagued by disputes over dates and venues.

The peace talks were launched by a U.S.-Soviet sponsored conference in Madrid on Oct. 30.

Israel says talks closer to home would facilitate government consultations. It also believes negotiations in the Middle East — opposed by the Arab side — would symbolize Israel's recognition by its neighbors.

The talks aim to end the 43-year-old Arab-Israeli conflict despite Israeli rejection of direct negotiations with independent Palestinian negotiators. Little has been achieved by the talks between other Arab negotiators and the Israelis.

Mr. Katzav, close to Mr. Shamir, said: "We hope during the next meeting in Washington there will be more fruitful and constructive talking."

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said Thursday multilateral Middle East peace talks would be held in Moscow on Jan. 28 and 29 despite political turmoil in the fast-disintegrating Soviet Union.

The multilateral talks, aimed at discussing arms control, water and other regional issues, are open to virtually any country.

Settler-bank dispute

Jewish settlers in the occupied Golan Heights said Sunday recent bank foreclosures on their property were tied to fears Israel may return the strategic region to Syria in a future peace agreement.

"The banks are worried that the government will make concessions of some kind here on the Golan Heights, and the banks will come out of it with nothing," said Menachem Pudem, secretary of the Moshav Avnei Eitan collective settlement.

"At the moment, I think this is the reason for the banks' swooping down on us," he told reporters.

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Syria has set the return of the plateau as a condition for any future peace treaty with Israel. Israel, which seized the area during the 1967 Middle East war, calls the Heights essential for its "security."

Members of the settlement barricaded a major Golan road with burning tyres Sunday. They said

the protest would intensify Monday with a strike by most of the region's settlements.

Settlers blame their credit woes on high interest rates set during the soaring inflation of the early 1980s.

But a senior bank official who declined to be identified said foreclosure procedures began

long before the Middle East talks opened in Madrid on Oct. 30.

"The settlers are using the peace talks as a smokescreen for the real issue, the fact that they have debts they have not repaid," he said.

Mr. Sharon told army radio on Sunday that Israel was going to build thousands of houses for

Jews in the occupied territories next year, continuing a construction boom to house 350,000 new Soviet Jewish immigrants.

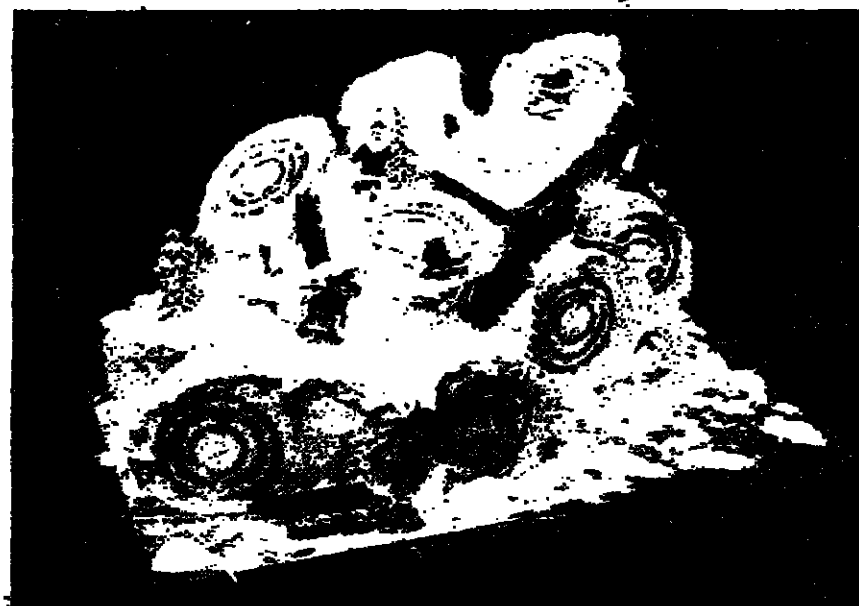
Mr. Sharon named the occupied West Bank, Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and Arab East Jerusalem as well as Arab areas within Israel's pre-1967 borders as sites for the new construction.

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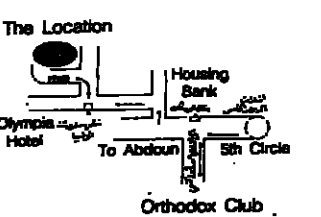
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Labour shortage looms in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Rapid economic growth has drained Malaysia's once ample pool of labour and further expansion is threatened by an acute manpower shortage and neglect of the English language. Manufacturing, which spearheaded the boom in recent years, has been hardest hit, according to the Malaysian Employees Federation (MEF). The MEF estimates that the country lacks 50,000 to 80,000 workers in this sector. Construction has also been hurt.

The workforce numbers 6.8 million and unemployment is estimated at about five per cent. The Malaysian Manpower Department projected a total short-

fall of more than 580,000 workers by the year 2000. Employers, investors and government officials worry that the labour shortage could deter investment, boost inflation and slow the robust growth that has pushed Malaysia toward the ranks of industrialised countries. Economic growth was 10 per cent last year when the country attracted \$3.1 billion in foreign investments. The Malaysian Institute of Economic Research, a private think tank, forecasts growth of 7.3 per cent this year.

Several foreign investment proposals had to be turned away, said Deputy Prime Minister Chahur Baba, who envisions billions of dollars in losses "if nobody

taps the rubber trees and harvests the oil palm."

Rubber and oil palm plantations are short of unskilled workers, while electronics factories can't find enough skilled ones. An estimated half million foreigners hold relatively low-paying jobs spurned by Malaysians, most of them on plantations or in construction. Most of these workers are in the country illegally from Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

At the same time, about 100,000 Malaysians seek better wages in other countries. Labour ministry sources said an estimated 24,000 workers commute over the border daily to factory

Chinese government to tackle deficit by cutting bureaucracy and subsidies

BEIJING (AP) — The Chinese government plans to cut its bloated bureaucracy and billions of dollars in business subsidies next year to combat a growing budget deficit, an official newspaper has reported.

The cost-cutting measures were announced by Finance Minister Wang Bingqian at a recent national conference, the China Daily reported.

It said this year's deficit will be larger than the planned 13.3 billion yuan (\$2.5 billion), but did not say by how much.

The government said in August that state disaster relief alone for areas hit by severe flooding this summer would add 7.8 billion yuan (\$1.3-1.5 billion) to the deficit.

Last year, China had a record deficit of 13.9 billion yuan (\$2.5 billion) — the country's 10th deficit in 11 years. Mr. Wang blamed that shortfall on failing state-run enterprises and tax revenues that fell six per cent short of projections.

Mr. Wang said getting the budget under control requires reducing food and business subsidies, cutting down the 140-million strong bureaucracy and closing up tax loopholes.

Government offices in China are filled with idle officials drinking tea, reading newspapers, playing cards and gossiping.

Mr. Wang did not say how big the cuts in subsidies or personnel would be or how much would be saved by doing so.

One-third of the state budget each year goes toward price subsidies and bailing out state-owned enterprises, 40 per cent of which are in the red. This year's budget allocated 33 billion yuan (\$6.1 billion) for price subsidies and 56.6 billion yuan (\$10.5 billion) for money-losing firms.

Mr. Wang blamed this year's growing deficit on inefficiency and poor performance of state-run enterprises, and warned that their subsidies would be reduced

or eliminated if they fail to get out of debt.

He also urged local officials to shut down debt-ridden firms. He said more than 2,000 failing state enterprises already have stopped production or been merged with other firms.

But many more continue churning out outdated, unsalable products that pile up in warehouses. The government generally has been reluctant to allow its monolithic enterprises to go bankrupt, fearing that millions of disgruntled, unemployed workers could create social and political chaos.

Meanwhile, China's foreign trade grew by 19 per cent in this year's first three quarters, boosted by a hefty increase in imports.

An official newspaper reported that imports totalled \$43.3 billion, an 18.5 per cent from a year earlier. Exports reached \$49.5 billion, a 19.5 per cent increase, the China Daily said. The trade surplus was \$6.2 billion.

However, 1990's figures make for a low comparative base be-

cause China cut imports sharply that year as part of an overall austerity programme.

In addition, the import figure is skewed because it includes foreign flood relief donations in the form of goods. Li Yan, a spokeswoman at the Chinese Customs, said by telephone that flood relief goods represented a substantial portion of imports from June to September. She said an exact figure had not yet been determined.

Trade figures from Chinese Customs are based on all commodities crossing the border, including foreign aid and grants in the form of commodities, import of equipment by foreign enterprises as direct investment and imported raw materials processed in China and exported. These items usually are not considered part of a country's imports.

In the first three quarters, these items totalled nearly \$3 billion, the China Daily reported.

It said imports this year peaked in August. The \$5.6 billion in imports then represented a 30 per cent increase over August 1990.

China appealed to the international community for flood relief aid in mid-July, and donations in funds and goods poured in the following weeks. The civil affairs ministry said foreign donations of commodities totalled \$30 million.

The newspaper highlighted the growth of imports, saying they increased because "the government gave it a higher priority."

It said a "special one-time infusion of government cash" has resulted in "buying sprees" for products from major developed countries. The report did not say how much money was made available or when, but added that negotiations were continuing for more equipment and other "big-ticket items."

Based on customs records, China imported more timber, paper and pulp, synthetic fibers, wool, iron ore, petroleum and chemical fertilisers in the first nine months than in January-September 1990.

Imports fell for wheat, sugar, food oil, rolled steel, refrigerators, television sets, videocassette recorders, tape recorders, cameras and motorcycles.

President promises policy to slow S. Korean growth

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — President Roh Tae-Woo has said the government will slow the nation's economic growth next year by tightening the money supply and curbing domestic consumption.

Meanwhile, tax authorities said they would investigate 9,500 people suspected of evading taxes while maintaining extravagant lifestyles.

The probe is part of a government-led frugality campaign, which began in August with alarms over rising trade deficits, imports of expensive fore-

ign goods and extravagant consumption.

Mr. Roh's speech signalled an economic policy shift from expansion to stability next year. Critics contend that the government's growth-oriented policy has resulted in high inflation and a huge current account deficit.

In a budget statement read by Prime Minister Chung Won-Shik at the National Assembly, Mr. Roh said South Korea's economy will grow by eight per cent next year, compared with about nine per cent expected this year.

Mr. Roh said inflation will ease

next year, staying below 10 per cent. He also predicted that the current account deficit would drop sharply next year but did not give any figures. Korea recorded a \$7.7 billion current account deficit in the first eight months of the year.

"Difficulties in curbing price hikes are expected next year due to a series of elections, but the government will implement a strong money supply control measure," Mr. Roh said.

Large amounts of campaign funds usually trigger inflation in major election years.

BCCI pleads guilty to fraud, larceny

NEW YORK (R) — The Bank of Credit and Commerce International has pleaded guilty to fraud and larceny as part of its settlements of charges stemming from the largest financial fraud in history.

The formal plea to charges brought by the Manhattan District attorney's office followed an agreement announced Thursday in which the disgraced bank will give up \$550 million in the biggest single criminal forfeiture ever obtained by the U.S. government.

The agreement settled both federal charges brought in Washington and the New York indictment resulting from probes into the fraud, in which losses were estimated to exceed \$15 billion.

"The magnitude of the crimes charged in the indictment boggles the mind," said New York State Supreme Court Justice Peter McQuillan. "It is probably the largest bank fraud ever perpetrated."

Under terms of the plea entered by Frederick Davis, a lawyer for BCCI liquidators in Britain, Luxembourg and the Cayman Islands, BCCI will also pay a \$10 million fine.

Luxembourg-based BCCI, which once had more than \$20 billion in assets and branches in 69 countries, collapsed this year and in July banking regulators around the world seized the bank.

Since then, court-appointed liquidators from overseas have been negotiating with federal and state prosecutors in the United States to try to protect assets for the millions of depositors.

Under New York State law, prosecutors could have sought as much as a \$40 billion fine against BCCI. A payment of that size would have eliminated funds for creditors and depositors.

"Our concern has always been to minimise claims against BCCI," Mr. Davis told the court.

He later told reporters that BCCI was expected to plead guilty to the federal charges in mid-January. After that time, money from the forfeiture will be distributed.

Half of the forfeiture will be placed in a special fund to be used by the U.S. government to cover losses from any failures of American banks that were controlled by BCCI.

The fund will also be used to aid two troubled banks secretly controlled by BCCI: First American Bankshares Inc. in Washington and the Independence Bank of Encino, California.

The remaining funds will be used in other countries to pay depositors who lost their money when BCCI collapsed.

Gulf Arab ministers approve \$10 b fund

KUWAIT (R) — Gulf Arab ministers have approved plans for a \$10 billion development fund to channel aid to other Arab states, the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) said Sunday.

Finance and foreign ministers from the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), meeting ahead of a summit of their leaders Monday, also decided to implement a joint economic agreement within eight years, KUNA said.

"GCC foreign and finance ministers approved an agreement regarding development efforts in Arab countries with a capital of \$10 billion," KUNA said.

The announcement meant the ministers from the oil-rich economic and defence alliance had patched up differences on how to share the cost of the fund, initially approved last April.

The aid plans are expected to be approved by the leaders of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates during their first post-Gulf war summit due to

begin in Kuwait City Monday. GCC foreign and finance ministers also set an eight-year timetable to implement what was left of a joint economic agreement signed by the decade-old defence and economic alliance in 1982.

KUNA said most of the new measures approved for a GCC common market would be put on the summit agenda. A few others would be referred to committees for further study.

Officials say the six Gulf states, which straddle more than 40 per cent of the world's oil reserves, are making slow progress towards unifying their banking, customs and share trading regulations.

Trade among GCC members only accounts for about seven per cent of the group's total while customs tariffs vary widely.

Some states allow other GCC nationals to buy shares in local firms while others do not.

Diplomats say the conservative Gulf monarchies want to remove

of the obstacles preventing closer economic cooperation at this year's summit, their first since Iraqis left Kuwait last February.

The six states also want to set up a joint aid fund because they feel much of the money they pumped into other Arab economies during the past decade was wasted.

Iraq was one of the main recipients of GCC aid while other beneficiaries such as Jordan, Yemen and the Palestine Liberation Organisation sympathised with Baghdad.

Officials say all Arab states will eventually benefit from the new fund but Egypt and Syria, whose troops joined the U.S.-led alliance against Iraq, would initially receive most of the money.

Aid from the fund will go to the private sectors of recipient states rather than governments as in the past, most likely to aid programmes approved by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, officials say.

New Australian premier expected to boost economy

SYDNEY (R) — Australia's new Prime Minister Paul Keating is expected to move quickly to boost the economy but the price could be rekindled inflation and a higher current account deficit, economists have said.

"He will do what he can get away with in the short term," Commonwealth Bank economist Todd Ritchie said.

Mr. Ritchie said Mr. Keating, a former treasurer who topped prime minister Bob Hawke in a secret ballot Thursday, could cut official cash interest rates, now 8.5 per cent, twice by March to boost the flagging domestic economy.

Mr. Keating told his first cabinet meeting Friday "the task before the government is difficult" in electoral and economic terms, government sources said.

Mr. Keating indicated no action would be taken until the next cabinet meeting on Jan. 6 when he would seek feedback from ministers on his proposed new policies, they said.

Among the pledges he made at a news conference Thursday was to fight unemployment, which was 10.5 per cent in November, and for an economic recovery.

Mr. Ritchie said he expected a major economic and political statement from Mr. Keating early next year that may include tax cuts in return for low wage rises.

He said such a trade-off would push down inflation from the September quarter's annual rate of 3.3 per cent in the short term but it would rise to five per cent and more in 1993.

Job growth would resume in the three months to March 31 and keep strengthening, he said.

"But it's going to be a while before that translates into a fall in the unemployment rate," Mr. Ritchie said.

Unemployment could be around nine per cent by May 1993 when the next national election is due, he said.

The current account deficit, forecast by the government to be 14 billion dollars (\$10.7 billion) in the year to June 30, 1992, was widening and could be 19 billion dollars (\$14.4 billion) or more in 1992/93 due to higher imports, Mr. Ritchie said.

Joanne Byrnes of SBC Dominguez Barry said she believed official interest rates would be cut to at least 7.5 per cent in January and possibly lower later.

Mr. Keating's expected pro-growth strategy would lead to a blow-out in inflation expectations and the current account deficit, she said.

"You must come out of recession very slowly to lock in (lower inflation) but he's talking about kick-starting the economy and pushing it along to boom levels," Ms. Byrnes said.

She forecast inflation of four to 4.5 per cent by late 1992 and a current account deficit of at least 16 billion dollars (\$12.2 billion) in 1991/92 and 18.5 billion (\$14.1 billion) in 1992/93.

National Australia Bank senior economist Peter McManus said Mr. Keating's aim of growth with low inflation would be hampered by expected weakness in major overseas economies.

It would be difficult to push unemployment under 10 per cent by the next election "unless he (Keating) tries to spend his way out," he said adding that this was unlikely.

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World welcomes new commonwealth

LONDON (AP) — World leaders welcomed the new commonwealth of 11 former Soviet republics formed Saturday while expressing concern about the Commonwealth's nuclear policy.

German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said the 11 republics could be recognised before the end of the year if they pledge to respect disarmament treaties signed by the former Soviet Union and make clear who is in control of the nuclear weapons.

He said the new states — now grouped in the Commonwealth of Independent States — should become part of "trans-Atlantic European cooperation" to preserve international stability. He urged the West to give them quick help.

"We hope the agreement will help to provide a stable and peaceful environment to permit the individual republics to pursue democracy and market economy reforms," said White House spokeswoman Judy Smith in Washington.

But Ms. Smith said decisions on extending U.S. diplomatic recognition separately to each of the republics will not be made until after Secretary of State James Baker reports to Mr. Bush on his visits last week to five of them.

Also, "we will, of course, want to consult with our allies," Ms. Smith said.

Mr. Baker was briefed by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who hosted the Commonwealth conference, through a phone call to his plane while en route Saturday back to Washington.

"We're very satisfied," a senior U.S. official said in Brussels after the republics signed the accord. Britain's Foreign Office said, "it is encouraging that republican leaders are negotiating arrangements in a peaceful way between themselves."

A foreign office spokesman, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Britain and its Western allies are stressing the importance of ensuring control of nuclear and other armaments in the former Soviet republics.

They have also sought assurances that the republics would take on the obligations of the former Soviet Union in areas such as arms control, non-proliferation, human rights and debt, he said.

Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe said his country welcomed the agreement establishing a commonwealth "on the basis of the principles of ethnic self-determination and equality and sovereignty of the people, as well as of liberty, democracy and a market economy."

Mr. Watanabe said Japan would begin considering diplomatic recognition, but also underlines the importance of respecting existing agreements and assuring tight central control over nuclear weapons.

There was no immediate official reaction from France, but the conservative French daily *Le Figaro* praised Mikhail Gorbachev, without whom "the Soviet Union would still exist."

"He killed communism in wanting to save it. This is why he will be remembered in history as a great man," *Le Figaro* said.

Mr. Genscher also warmly praised Mr. Gorbachev as a "personality of historical rank" whose role in German unification would never be forgotten by the German people.

Mr. Gorbachev "opened the way for freedom and democracy for the people of the middle and Eastern Europe and for the people of the Soviet Union," Mr. Genscher said in Bonn.

Mr. Gorbachev is expected to resign soon, perhaps within days, from his obsolete job as Soviet president.

Romania, which recognised the former republics of Armenia and Russia this week and Moldova in August, extended recognition on Saturday to Byelorussia. It says it is recognising Ukraine, but still disputes Ukrainian control over territories that were part of Romania before World War II.

Iran's Supreme National Security Council said it was ready to recognise the independence of the republics, particularly the "Asian Muslim republics" and Russia, according to an Iranian News Agency report, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corp.

It said the council session, chaired by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, agreed to take measures to assist the newly independent republics "in choosing their future path and establishing peaceful ties" with the rest of the world.

Soviet republics bury hatchet, but violence flares in Georgia

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Former Soviet republics have agreed to live in harmony in a new Commonwealth of Independent States but Georgia remained in the grip of civil unrest as fighting flared in its capital Sunday.

The commonwealth accord, signed Saturday in the Kazakh capital Alma-Ata, put an end to the Soviet Union as a legal and political entity and consigned President Mikhail Gorbachev to early retirement.

Mr. Gorbachev looks set to bow to the inevitable and step down this week after struggling in vain to defend his vision of a common political and economic space, the alternative to which he said might be a bloody conflict worse than that in Yugoslavia.

The ink had scarcely dried on the Alma-Ata document when fresh fighting between government and opposition forces erupted in Georgia — the only republic not to sign the accord and constant reminder of the challenge faced by republics in preserving peace and stability as central power crumbles.

A presidential spokesman said seven people had been killed and fighting continued after opposition National Guardsmen attacked the government headquarters in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi.

Local journalists said there had been heavy fighting and reports of deaths ranged from four to eight. Heavy artillery and other weapons were being deployed around the city centre.

Georgia, in the heart of the volatile Transcaucasus, sent high-level observers to the Alma-Ata meeting establishing the Commonwealth which Russian leader

Boris Yeltsin has hailed as a new chance for preventing conflict. But the final document failed to resolve economic and military differences.

The commonwealth accord had still to be ratified by Republican parliaments and further discussions on defence will be tackled at talks in the Byelorussian capital Minsk on Dec. 30.

Questions remained concerning the Kremlin's nuclear arsenal and command of its 3.7 million troops, but Mr. Yeltsin has won ultimate control over the nuclear button.

Ukraine is keen to restrict the Commonwealth's military role to the agreed unified command over nuclear arms, while other republics see a bigger strategic force.

The agreement could also face an economic challenge at the start of the year when Yeltsin pushes ahead with a planned price liberalisation.

This could put intolerable strain on the budgets of some other republics, notably in central Asia, as they compete for food and other essential goods with a higher-priced Russian market.

The original Commonwealth accord, signed on Dec. 8 by the three Slav republics of Russia, Byelorussia and Ukraine, stressed free-market principles and coordinated economic policies. But the Alma-Ata document said little about this.

Eight more republics joined the commonwealth at the weekend. They are Kazakhstan, Armenia and Azerbaijan in Transcaucasus, Moldova on the Romanian border and the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan,

Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan.

Mr. Yeltsin, clearly the dominant figure as the 11 leaders addressed a televised new conference Saturday, said on his return to Moscow that the republics would pursue their own economic policies with the rouble as the common currency.

Ukraine and Byelorussia have both announced plans to issue coupons to replace roubles next year, which could threaten monetary coordination.

At the news conference, Mr. Yeltsin made clear there would be no place for Mr. Gorbachev in the Commonwealth.

The Russian leader has taken over virtually every lever of central power, including Mr. Gorbachev's office in the Kremlin. Mr. Yeltsin said the republican leaders had made "appropriate decisions" about the 60-year-old Soviet leaders, adding:

"We respect Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev and want in a civilised state to put an end to the tradition since 1917, in which every state leader is buried and then later reburied or considered a criminal."

Meanwhile, Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov began the day Saturday representing the Soviet Union at the United Nations, without a country.

The 11 states, meeting in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, agreed that Russia would take over the Soviet Union's seat on the U.N. Security Council, according to Seitkazy Mateev, a spokesman for Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

However, to be granted membership, a state must receive the

recommendation of the Security Council and a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly.

Russia and the two republics already represented at the United Nations, Ukraine and Byelorussia, would push for all the other participants in the Commonwealth to have seats as well.

The turnover of the Soviet seat to Russia would suit the United States, Britain, France and China — the other permanent security Council members. They much prefer a single, relatively stable Russia holding the seat to its being held by a loose confederation of states that would have to enter into lengthy inter-republic consultations on any international crisis.

Russia would be considered, in the view of the other Council members, the "continuation" of the Soviet Union for diplomatic purposes.

The precedent for this in international law is the division of British colonial India in 1947 into India and Pakistan.

In that case, India was considered the continuation of the nation, and Pakistan entered the United Nations as a new member.

At the time, the General Assembly's legal subcommittee decided that a nation does not cease to be a U.N. member simply because its name or border changes. Only the extinction of a state would require its removal from the U.N. system.

Since Russia is assuming virtually all the obligations of the former Soviet Union, it can be viewed as a legitimate continuation of that country.

Truce broken in Croatia

BELGRADE (R) — A battlefield truce agreed by Croats and Serbs in central Croatia appeared to have little effect Sunday, and political divisions in disintegrating Yugoslavia were deepening further.

The truce to cover western Slavonia, an area of Croatia inhabited mainly by Serbs, was scheduled to begin at 8 a.m. (0700 GMT), but like the 14 ceasefires internationally arranged in past months, it was broken almost immediately.

Belgrade television said Croatian forces had attacked army positions near Novska, Lipik and Pakrac, and fighting was also reported from Jasenovac and Nova Gradiska.

Croatian radio said Pakrac and two villages north of it had come under fierce mortar, artillery and rocket fire, killing two people and wounding many more.

It also said the Adriatic port of Zadar had been damaged by artil-

lery fire overnight.

None of the reports could be independently confirmed.

Tanjug News Agency said United Nations and European Community observers would meet army and Croatian delegates on the border between Croatia and Serbia later Sunday to try to make the ceasefire more effective.

Thousands of civilians, most of them ethnic Serbs, have streamed south to neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina in recent weeks to escape the mayhem which has wrecked their rural homeland.

But their flight, already hampered by snow and rains, was halted Sunday by the closure of a key bridge at Slavonki Brod, over the River Sava, leaving only one crossing point open between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Controls were tightened following Saturday's resolution by Bosnian Serbs to declare their own republic — the latest step in Yugoslavia's break-up and one

bringing the threat of wider warfare.

The Serbs acted after the two other main groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Muslims and the Croats, voted last week to seek its international recognition as a separate state.

The Muslims termed the Serb declaration "a legally dubious and politically suspicious act" and said Bosnia-Herzegovina would continue to be a communal state of all who wanted to live in it.

But as in Croatia, the Bosnian Serbs have no intention of living in a state separated from Serbia, and their vote looked certain to precipitate its break-up — whether by force or negotiation is the key question.

Four of the six Yugoslav republics — Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina — have now said they will seek international recognition as independent states on Jan. 15 under conditions devised by the European Community (EC).

4 killed in Northern Ireland shootings

BELFAST (R) — Four people have been shot dead in a fresh outburst of sectarian revenge killings on one of the bloodiest days of the year in Northern Ireland.

The 12-hour shooting spree across the British province Saturday shocked security chiefs who had put 2,000 extra troops on the streets in an attempt to stem the bloodletting by rival Republican and Protestant gunmen.

A 19-year-old student died saving his father from a gunman who burst into their family shop in the County Tyrone village of Moy. Robin Farmer, back home for the Christmas holidays from university in Scotland, was shot twice in the heart when he flung his father Bob to the floor during the attack.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA), fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland, tried to kill Bob Farmer last month with a car bomb that was spotted and defused by British army bomb disposal experts.

Staff in the shop managed to capture the gunman, who was arrested later by police.

Saturday night saw two bloody attacks within four hours, raising fears that the province could be heading into another round of "tit-for-tat" killings that have become a familiar feature of the 22-year-old conflict.

Military blocks off downtown Phnom Penh; gunfire rings out

PHNOM PENH (AP) — The military sealed off downtown streets Sunday and soldiers fired into the air to discourage further anti-government protests.

Reporters saw one man who had been wounded by gunfire in an area where several hotels are located. Troops dragged the man, into a shop.

The unrest has forced the delay

of an important meeting of the country's reconciliation body, made up of leaders of the government and the three guerrilla groups it fought during nearly 13 years of war. The leaders are trying to implement a peace accord.

It also forced the government to postpone visits of foreign dignitaries, including the Chinese,

Laotian and Vietnamese foreign ministers, said Foreign Minister Hor Nam Hong.

The military moved armoured personnel carriers and hundreds of heavily armed troops into the downtown after four days of unrest. Workers and civil servants protesting corruption and abuse by the Vietnamese-installed government have joined the protests.

N. Korea wants formal word that U.S. nuclear arms gone

SEOUL (AP) — North Korean President Kim Il Sung has told a U.S. congressman his nation will accept nuclear inspections only after formal notification that U.S. nuclear weapons have been removed from South Korea, a report said Sunday.

The North Korean leader also demanded direct talks with Washington on inspections of suspected nuclear arms facilities, said the Korean News Agency Yonhap.

The report was based on talks Sunday between South Korean officials and U.S. Rep. Stephen Solarz, who spent three days in North Korea last week. South Korean and U.S. officials declined to give details of those talks.

The United States, other major powers and North Korea's neighbours have expressed unease over intelligence reports that the hard-line Communist state is nearing nuclear weapons capability.

South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo declared his nation nuclear-free last week, stating in effect that U.S. nuclear weapons already had been withdrawn. The removal of U.S. weapons was seen as satisfying the North's

major condition for allowing international inspection of its nuclear facilities.

But Yonhap quoted Pan Ki-Moon, director-general of the Foreign Ministry's American Bureau, as saying Mr. Solarz told South Korean officials that North Korea is demanding Washington's confirmation of the U.S. nuclear arms withdrawal as a condition to signing an inspection agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Mr. Kim Il Sung was further quoted as rejecting a proposal by South Korean Prime Minister Chung Won-Shik for simultaneous pilot inspections of nuclear facilities and weapons sites in both South and North Korea.

Mr. Kim instead demanded that while the IAEA would inspect North Korean facilities, North Korean inspectors would check on U.S. military bases in the South, Yonhap reported.

The North long has demanded direct negotiations with the United States on nuclear and other issues and has tried to bypass its longtime rival, South Korea. Washington repeatedly has rebuffed the demand.

Mr. Solarz visit to North Korea followed the signing of a historic agreement calling for peaceful coexistence between the rival Koreas.

He briefed officials in Tokyo Saturday and on Sunday saw South Korean Foreign Minister Lee Sang-Ok, opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung and other South Korean officials.

"Mr. Solarz expressed serious concern about the North accepting nuclear inspections and abandoning nuclear weapons development," said a statement from Kim Dae-Jung's Democratic Party.

"Solarz's opinion asked the North does not accept nuclear inspections," the statement said. It said Mr. Kim told the New York Democrat he opposed any hasty use of force and urged diplomatic and economic pressure through the United Nations.

Mr. Solarz, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, was the first American politician to discuss nuclear issues with the North Korean leader since nuclear concerns escalated early this year.

Yonhap said Mr. Solarz quoted Kim Il Sung as saying North Korea has neither the ability nor

the intention to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, the North's official Workers (Communist) Party newspaper *Rodong Sinmun* accused the United States Sunday of "intensifying an unprecedented military threat and nuclear blackmail against us."

The commentary, carried by the North's Korean Central News Agency, monitored in Tokyo, said the Americans were citing "the fictitious threat of nuclear weapons development" by North Korea.

"Having voiced cheers at their 'success' in the anti-Communist, anti-Socialist policy in Europe, the U.S. imperialists direct the sharp edge of the anti-Communist, anti-Socialist strategy against the eastern hemisphere and set it as the first task in establishing a 'new order of the world' to contain the Socialist countries in this region," the commentary declared.

In Tokyo Saturday, Mr. Solarz and Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa agreed that their nations should pressure North Korea to abandon nuclear weapons development, officials said.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Oil tank explosion kills 8 in Japan

TOKYO (AP) — A tank at an edible oil factory in the western city of Osaka exploded and burned Sunday, killing eight workers who were inspecting it, police and fire officials said. Nine workers were inspecting the 15-metre-high, seven-metre diameter tank at Fuji Oil Co., a leading Japanese manufacturer of edible oil and fat, said a fire official, speaking on condition of anonymity. The ninth worker was unhurt, the official said. Fire fighters brought the fire under control three hours later, the official added. The tank is used to extract oil for edible oil and fat from coconut oil and palm oil, the officials said. They said the cause of the explosion was not immediately known. The plant has 750 employees, of whom 60 to 70 were working Sunday, officials said. Fuji Oil, established in 1950, employs 1,442 people in all.

Quake reported in Soviet Far East

GOLDEN, Colorado (AP) — An earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter Scale jarred the Kuril Islands in eastern Russia Sunday, the largest of a series of tremors to strike the area, the Geological Survey reported. The earthquake was centred 1,450 kilometres northeast Tokyo, said Pat Jorgenson, a U.S. Geological Survey spokeswoman in Menlo Park, California. It struck the Pacific Ocean islands at 6:43 in the evening past, which is 3:43 a.m. EST. The Richter Scale is a gauge of the energy released by an earthquake, as measured by the ground motion recorded on a seismograph. The Kurils are a remote and sparsely populated group of islands off northern Japan. The "earthquake is the latest and largest in a series of tremors," Ms. Jorgenson said. The set began on Dec. 7, 1991. A tremor measuring 6.5 on the Richter Scale rumbled through the area on Dec. 13, and on Dec. 19, a 6.6 earthquake struck. Ms. Jorgenson said there were no reports of damage or injuries from the 7.5 earthquake or any of its predecessors.

Mitterrand's popularity drops again

PARIS (AP) — President Francois Mitterrand has suffered another political blow with the release of a poll showing that only 22 per cent of those questioned were satisfied with his performance. The approval rating was a six-point drop since November, when 28 per cent of those polled were happy with the president. The poll by the respected IFOP polling firm for the newspaper *Journal du Dimanche* said 65 per cent of the 1,924 people questioned between Nov. 25 and Dec. 9 were "not satisfied" with the Socialist president. IFOP questioned people 18 years of age and older. No margin of error was given. Mr. Mitterrand has been in deep political trouble on the home front for most of his year with people saying they are fed up with the president who has been in office more than a decade. Recently, he has been attacked by opponents on both the left and right for using foreign affairs to divert attention from domestic problems, including an unemployment rate of 10 per cent.

Australians still prefer Hawke — poll

SYDNEY (R) — Australians would prefer Bob Hawke as prime minister rather than Paul Keating, the man who deposed him last Thursday, according to one of the first opinion polls since Mr. Keating took office. In a poll conducted Friday, the day 47-year-old Keating was sworn in as Australia's youngest prime minister, 53 per cent of voters said they would prefer Mr. Hawke as prime minister while 39 per cent favoured Mr. Keating. Former treasurer Keating topped Mr. Hawke in a leadership ballot of Labour parliamentarians by 56 votes to 51. Mr. Hawke was the ruling Australian Labour Party's longest serving prime minister, coming to office in March 1983. The leadership change is a desperate attempt by the Labour Party, trailing the opposition Liberal-National Party coalition by 21 per cent, to win the next election due by May 1993. However the poll in the Sunday Telegraph also showed that most Australians would prefer opposition leader John Hewson as prime minister above both Mr. Keating and Mr. Hawke. Mr. Hewson scored a popularity rating of 71 per cent in the poll, conducted by Quadrant Research Services among 1,234 voters. Mr. Hawke scored a 75 per cent approval rating shortly after winning office in 1983.

10 feared dead in Texas floods

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (R) — Raging flood waters washed across Texas for the fifth successive day, killing at least 10 people and forcing evacuation of about 200, authorities said Saturday. Authorities confirmed that 10 people had died since the flooding started late Wednesday and believed two others died but their bodies had not been recovered. The death toll is expected to rise as authorities search for at least five people missing across the state. An unidentified woman was presumed dead after her car slipped off a road late Friday near dripping springs, the Texas Department of Safety said. Authorities also found Saturday the bodies of a mother and her infant son in their car which was swept off a road by flood waters, police said. Many roads across the state were closed and rainfall records including in San Antonio where more than 11 inches (28 cm) have fallen since late Wednesday. The National Weather Service said the slow-moving storm was likely to linger until Monday.

Head of Amnesty International quits

LONDON (R) — The secretary general of Amnesty International, Ian Martin, has resigned and will leave his post next year following an internal row over the future of the human rights organisation, an Amnesty spokesman said. Mr. Martin, 45, fought a tough battle to maintain the London-based group's cohesion at a time when it expanded its membership and widened its human rights goals. Amnesty spokesman Richard Roach said Mr. Martin had defeated the challenge to his authority but was quitting because he felt tired out by the struggle. "After that he felt it was time for new blood to take over," Mr. Roach said. Mr. Martin, who held the post for six years, will leave at the end of June. His post will be advertised next month. Amnesty, which is best known for its campaigns to free political prisoners, marked its 30th anniversary this year and now has more than one million members worldwide.

Burmese dissident still heads party

BERLIN (R) — The leader of Burma's government-in-exile said Saturday Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi remained head of the National League for Democracy Party (NLD), the east German news agency (ADN) reported. Sein Win, a cousin of Aung San Suu Kyi and prime minister of the provisional parallel government, told reporters in Berlin Burma's military junta wanted the party to expel her, it said. "The 46-year-old (Aung San) Suu Kyi has at no time been expelled from the NLD, although the junta headed by General Saw Maung wants to force leading dissidents to take this step through torture," ADN quoted Mr. Sein Win as saying. Official Radio Rangoon said last week Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been under house arrest since July 1989, had been expelled from the party she helped found and led in absentia to electoral victory last year. Mr. Sein, visiting human rights groups in Berlin, appealed to Western states not to recognise the junta, to stop all aid to it and not to tolerate human rights abuse in Burma.

Pope calls for genuine celebration

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul spoke out against superficial Christmas glitz Sunday, appealing for the birth of Christ to be celebrated as a feast of truth. "Christmas is also about rejecting all counterfeit things and false appearances, which human vanity often covers itself with, because it is the feast of truth," the Pope told thousands of pilgrims on St. Peter's Square in his weekly address. "The (birth of Christ) teaches us that the ways of the Lord pass through humility, silence, sacrifice and renouncing ourselves for the love of God and of our brother," he said.

COLUMN

Jan Fonda, Ted Turner wed in Florida

TALLAHASSEE, Florida (R) — Actress Jane Fonda and broadcaster Ted Turner were married Saturday in a small, private ceremony at Turner's estate in northern Florida, a spokesman said. It was the third marriage for Turner, 53, and Fonda, who turned 54 Saturday. Fonda was Oscar as best actress in 1971 for *Kluge* and in 1978 for *Coming Home* and now markets exercise videos. She and Turner, founder of Atlanta-based Cable News Network (CNN), announced their engagement on Dec. 7, 1990. A spokesman for Turner Broadcasting System Inc. in Atlanta said "it was a small gathering of friends and family. Reporters were told that about 30 people attended the wedding and that Fonda's 18-year-old son gave her away. CNN, which Turner founded in 1980, said Fonda wrote the wedding vows. Fonda was previously married to director Roger Vadim and Tom Hayden, a 1960s dissident who later served in the California State Assembly. She has two children. Turner has two children by his first wife and three by his second, from whom he was divorced in 1988 with a reported \$4 million settlement.

Michael Jackson's glove fetches £16,500

LONDON (AP) — A glove worn on stage by American singer and dancer Michael Jackson fetched £16,500 (\$30,030) at a sale of show business memorabilia at auctioneers Christie's. The glove, encrusted with white rhinestones and fake diamonds, was a Jackson trademark and the highlight of the sale. It was bought by a branch of the Hard Rock Cafe chain in Dublin, Ireland, set to open next summer. In other deals, the New York restaurant Planet Hollywood bought a chair that once belonged to Marlene Dietrich for £3,080 (\$5,605). The actress was to have had the chair's legs shortened so she could show her legs off to her best advantage. Planet Hollywood also paid £2,200 (\$4,004) for a school year book that belonged to actor James Dean and £1,300 (\$2,366) for British actor Noel Coward's black silk dressing gown.

Christmas carols 'could be calls to arms'

LONDON (R) — Some of the best-loved English Christmas carols bear more than tidings of comfort and joy, according to expert Ian Bradley. He says they could be coded calls to revolution. Mr. Bradley said recent research suggested the much-sung carol *O Come, All Ye Faithful* may have been written to rally to arms supporters of 18th century Bonnie Prince Charlie, who led an uprising of Jacobite Scottish Catholics against the English. The carol's assumed author, John Francis Wade, was a fervent Jacobite. Mr. Bradley wrote in the *Times* newspaper. The hymn was written in Latin two years before the uprising and not translated into English until 100 years later. Another favourite, *I Came Upon The Midnight Clear*, was inspired at least in part by the 1848 revolutions in France and Germany and chartist uprisings in Britain. Mr. Bradley said. And a third carol, *Angels From The Realms Of Glory*, first appearing in a radical English newspaper in 1816 and was written by a man jailed for supporting the storming of the Bastille, James Montgomery. "Those who protest (carols) have been robbed of their original religious purpose by being turned into the easiest keeps us filling supermarket shelves extra high throughout the festive season should pause. 'Some of our best-loved Christmas hymns are not quite what they seem,'" said Mr. Bradley, editor of an anthology of hymns.

Rash of graffiti ends in allergy

LONDON (R) — A graffiti artist who illegally decorated London underground trains had his case cut short by an allergy to paint, a court was told. Andrew Hayes, 26, pleaded guilty to painting criminal damage and said the allergy meant his graffiti-spraying days were over. Mr. Hayes, who signed his graffiti "Drax", was ordered to do 200 hours community service and pay prosecution costs of £400 (\$750).

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